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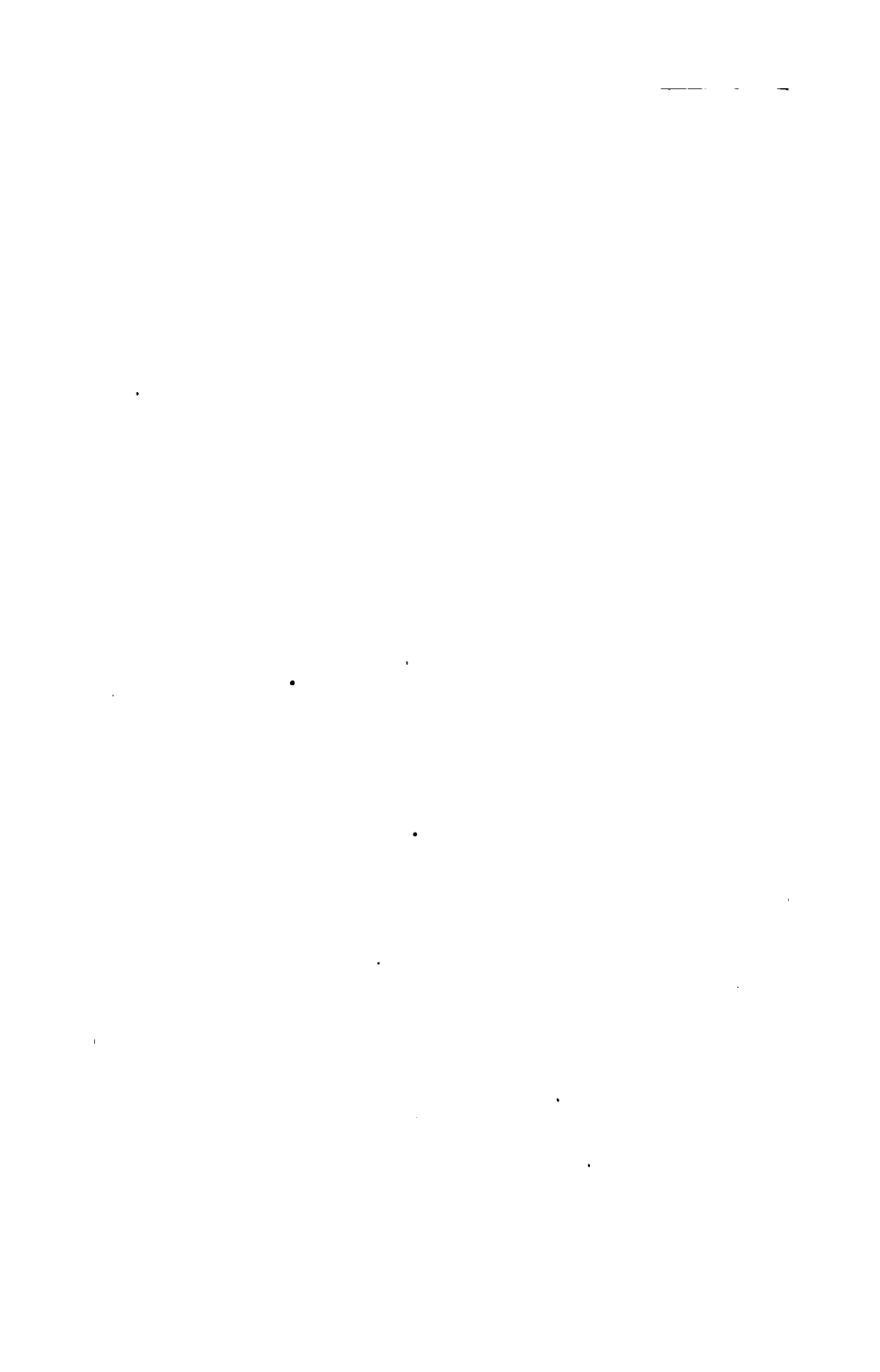
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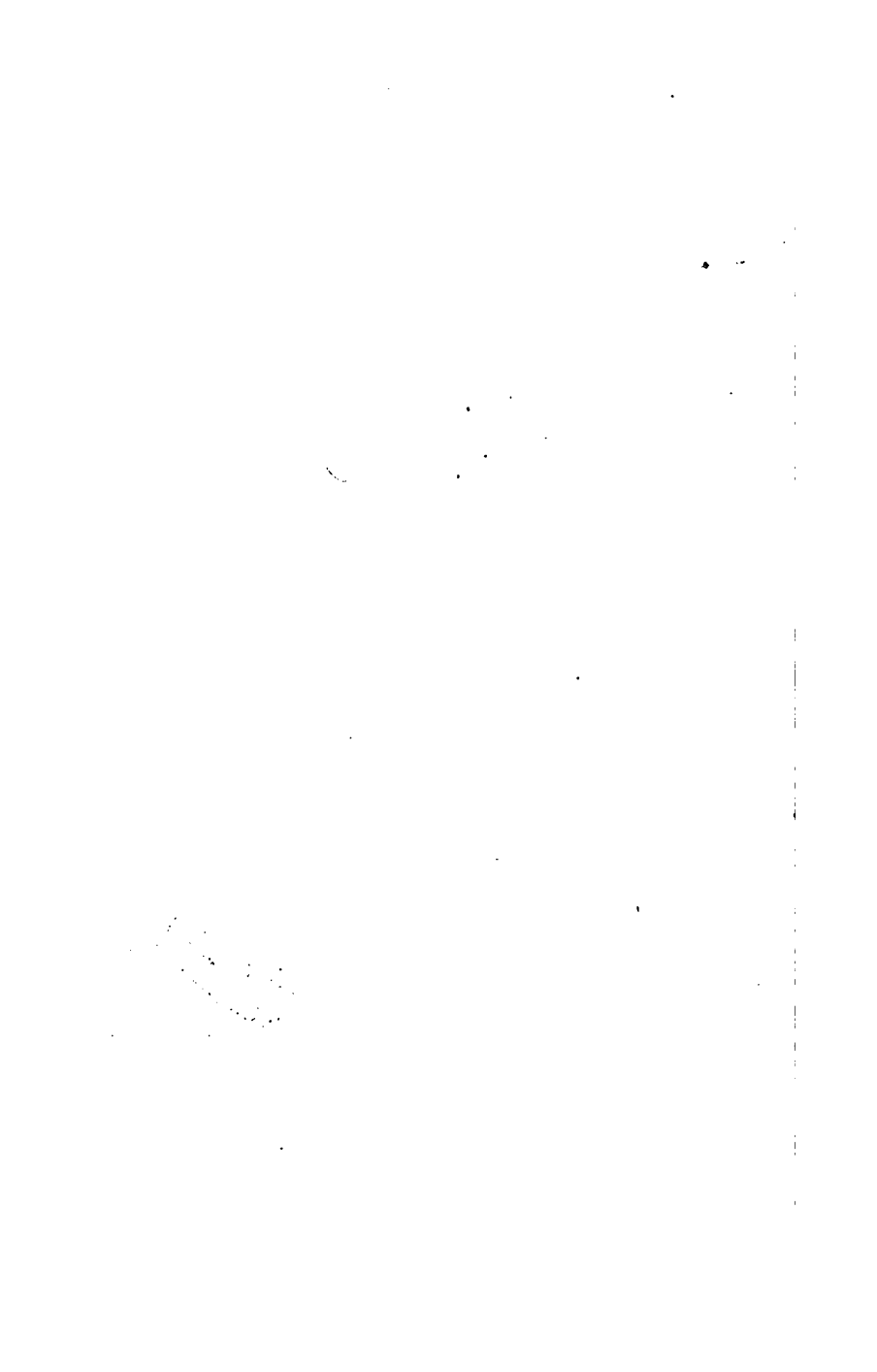
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THE
LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST,

In Glory on Earth;

SERIES OF MEDITATIONS,

FOR EACH DAY,

FROM EASTER TO ASCENSION DAY.

ADAPTED FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND,
FROM THE FRENCH OF NOUET.

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MANY, who have learnt some of the blessings of the "Sacred Feast of Lent," and these too, deepening upon them with each year's experience of its value, have found it much harder to use to their soul's health our Easter joys. It is far easier to fast religiously, than to feast. Lent is an image of our whole pilgrim-life, wherein we, by God's grace, sow good seed, and go our way weeping; Easter is the picture of the time when they who are saved shall come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them. Its thanksgivings are the faint prelude of the everlasting praises of the redeemed, and the endless Hallelujahs to Him, Who has overcome death for and in them. And we, such as we are, are mostly fitter for strictness and discipline, than for unmixed joy and thanksgiving. And so, since this life is, as a whole, the time in which we shall "mourn," the life to come, that wherein we shall be "comforted;" since our Lord pronounces those "blessed who weep now, for they shall laugh" for exceeding joy in heaven; "blessed they who hunger now," for they shall be filled" then, even with Him Who is "Angels' Food," the Fulness Which " filleth

all in all," we seem most of us to feel ourselves safer, when we are practising the preludes of this life, than when we would try to "sing the LORD's song in a strange land," the land of our pilgrimage, where our home is not. We are fitter, most of us, to walk with measured steps, held in with bit and bridle, more or less tight, as our strength will bear it, than to go freely in a large space. We are glad to have a rule from without, such as we are, laid upon us by the very season itself, because we are as yet too little "a law unto ourselves." A first Lent sometimes has weariness; they who have tasted it perhaps most often say, "Would it were Lent all the year round!" There *is* a danger in relaxing. In the luxurious Church of Antioch, which we many ways so sadly resemble, St. Chrysostome had to warn against excess of a very gross and miserable sort, which is expressed in the startling title of a homily, "De Resurrectione et contra ebriosos." And St. Bernard had at Easter¹ to preach as to those "lovers of the world, enemies of the Cross of CHRIST, who in vain had received the name of Christians, who through the whole Lenten season, long for the coming days of the Resurrection, alas! that they may indulge in pleasure more freely. O the grief! The time for sinning, the term for falling back, is the Resurrection of the SAVIOUR! For then do revellings and drunkenness return; chamberings and wantonness are renewed;

¹ Serm. 1 de temp. Pasch.

and the reins are given to concupiscences ; as though for this had Christ risen, not rather ' for our justification.' " Do ye thus," he says, " unhappy ones, honour CHRIST Whom ye have received ? When He is to come, ye prepare Him a lodging with groans, confessing your sins, chastening your bodies, giving alms ; and when ye have received Him, ye betray Him to His enemies ; yea rather, ye compel Him to go forth from you, by admitting your former wickednesses. For how can light dwell together with darkness, CHRIST with pride, avarice, ambition, brotherly hatred, fornication ? Is less owed to Him when Present, than when expected ? Doth the season of the Resurrection call for less reverence than that of the Passion ? But ye (as is plain) honour neither. For if ye suffered with Him, ye would also reign with Him."

But such persons, who in St. Bernard's time made fasting and humiliation an unwilling form (for which cause, he adds, were many invisible chastenings) would in our time and Church not fast at all. St. Bernard comes nearer to us, or rather he speaks of those who are as much above us, as any of us may hope, by the Grace of God, to have been removed from those overt sinners. " What have we to do," he adds at the close of the same sermon, "' to judge those who are without ?" Save that we mourn that we were once in the same snare, and joy that we have, through the sole operation of Divine Mercy, been delivered from it, in which out of brotherly

charity we grieve that these are miserably held. But would that even we may be found now sanctified, and wholly alien from this miserable and sacrilegious habit, and that in us, when the holy season of the Resurrection cometh, nothing may be lost or minished of our spiritual exercise, that we may rather give diligence to pass on and to grow."

And yet it would be mere self-deceit to think that there are not subtler, yet deadly sins of the flesh, to which the sudden transition from sharp fasting to repletion exposes. Our own Bp. Taylor warns against this transition; and sad as it is, yet it is a fact, that to some who keep Lent sincerely, the period of their LORD's Rising again is the most dangerous season in the whole year; lest they, after a reprieve, fall back again, to crucify Him again by their sins, with Whose Crucifixion and bitter Death for them, they hoped that they had lately sympathized. Not that they did not, for the time, gain by Lent, or that their case is not more hopeful than if they made no efforts; but that much or most of their gains in that holy season seem to be, for the time, thrown away. Yet not these only, but many besides have found the relaxation of Easter weaken and unspiritualize their whole selves, so that their Easter joys were soon darkened, and the season of life seemed to them to have become one of decay and death. At best, when they hoped to have been going on, they have found themselves going back.

Probably, what in most of such cases has been the root of the evil, has been the want of some definite aim and strong purpose; to which to apply the strength which they gained in a period of humiliation and strictness. In part, probably, it has also been that the relaxation at Easter has been too corporeal, and that the body having been, in whatever degree, weakened through the severities of Lent, its recruiting has been made too much an object for its own sake, in partial forgetfulness of that teaching, "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from the Mouth of God." In part, perhaps, it has been owing to unskilfulness in using the helps which we have, to enter into the religious character of our Easter Festival by meditation and prayer.

With regard to the first of these needs, it is, of course, plain to every thoughtful person, that so marked a period as Lent (short as it indeed is), should not end in itself. It plainly cannot be intended, that soul and body should for forty-six days go through a course of discipline and strictness, and come forth the same as they entered it. And this, the more, when at its close we have day by day commemorated the Passion of our Lord, sought reverently to enter into It, to sympathise with It, to feel decided bodily discomfort (if our strength permitted)

Sundays in Lent, although left wholly free to individuals as to bodily nourishment, are plainly not the same festivals as other Lord's Days. Who could use Palm Sunday as such?

at the time of His bitter Sufferings. And now, on the awful Day of His Crucifixion for us, we have perhaps counted the minutes by His Sufferings, when, to speak only of such Sufferings as we can conceive, all was crowded into those dread hours, in an intensity overwhelming to think of, and beyond the powers of our soul to take in, besides those mysterious Sufferings which none but Himself could know, since none but Himself could endure, Who, being Man, was also God and Man. And then, at last, the Church teaches us, in the solemn stillness of this day of pause and expectation, all the Sufferings which we have watched, ended, to enter into His Tomb, as we were in Baptism laid in it with Him, "baptized into His Death," "buried with Him by Baptism into Death," there, "by continual mortifying our corrupt affections," to remain enveloped in His Life-giving Death, guarded from the world and from ourselves. This, she teaches us, is the gate of the Resurrection.

Plainly, then, we are not to rise again the same as we entered there; not without some of the fragrance of the precious spices of mortification, to which we have been brought into such solemn nearness, nor without receiving in ourselves some Virtue from that Precious Death, which is, through death, our Life. Easter must be no abrupt transition, no mere reversal of Lent. Our Lenten self must not be laid aside, as a garb which, in obedience to the Church, we had cast around us for a while; nor its

holy discipline, like a sick man's diet, which, the season over, may be exchanged for unrestrained liberty. "The house of mourning" is not only the only safe vestibule to "the house of feasting," but we must have been well conversant with its lowly entrance, and have learnt well its ways, and had its character and habits well impressed on our souls, before we can safely pass on.

If we have used Lent aright, we shall now have some deeper insight into the sores and sicknesses of our own hearts, than when we entered upon it. We have, by God's mercy, been using with ourselves what hardness we hoped to be able to bear; have prayed daily for "new and contrite hearts, worthily" to "lament our sins, and acknowledge our wretchedness;" we have been seeking to be "dead with Christ," that we may "also live with Him." We have been using the knife to the sores of our own souls. And if we have done this faithfully, He Who "dwelleth in the humble and contrite heart," will have been with us, will have revealed to us more of our own evil, while we felt the balm of His Mercy. And this should plainly issue in a definite strife, which shall not cease, until God has "subdued our enemies before our face." Our Easter joys may change the mode of our warfare, not relax our inward strife. Strive we must now in gladness at the Resurrection, with uplifted hearts, as before in humble sympathy with the Passion. In Lent, we abased ourselves, now we hope to be lifted up in Him.

BUT whether through the sorrows of Lent or the joys of Easter, sunk low or borne aloft, our aim must be one—victory in His Strength, whether by the Lowliness of the Passion, or the thought of the Resurrection. The want of some such definite aim has, probably, been one chief reason, why the Easter season of some of us, instead of yielding its own proper fruits, has seemed to them rather to have been attended by the loss of that which went before³.

Yet Easter should be, outwardly too, a glad season, although not of a relaxed gladness. There is a religious use of feasting, as of fasting; a sanctified use of God's creatures with thanksgiving, as well as a religious refusal of "all pleasant meat." The very instance given in Holy Scripture of doing things, in themselves of aught account, to the glory of God, is our daily food. Feasting would not be so often spoken of in Holy Scripture, either as a natural expression of joy, or as a type of things spiritual, unless there were some religious way, in which refreshment of the body might serve to some spiritual end. Types do not, of necessity, wholly cease when the substance is come. They may exhibit to us Him Who has come, as they did to those before, Him Who was to come. Doubtless, bread and wine are so often spoken of in the Old Testament, because they were a type of the Holy Eucharist. Yet the peti-

³ Some suggestions as to the subsequent improvement of a season of retirement for devotion are given in the last of the sermons preached at St. Saviour's, Leeds.

tion, "Give us this day our daily Bread," includes the prayer for both "ghostly and bodily" food, for the support of our bodies, and for Him Who is the "Food of our souls." And so our "daily bread" may be to us an emblem of feeding upon Him, "the True Bread from Heaven." The frequent mention how JESUS took food with His disciples or others, must, among other meanings, surely have this, to teach His disciples how to take their food with JESUS. "Fasting is Angels' food;" yet feasting too may be to feast on and with our LORD. The soul may be nourished, while the body is refreshed. Then only is feasting dangerous, when it ends in itself, and so of such "their God is their belly," which alone they regard. Let any feast as he would by the lake of Galilee, when our Blessed LORD, Who now too feeds us, provided the feast, and prepared it, and "said unto them 'Come and dine,' and came and took bread and gave them, and fish likewise," and his feast will be no hindrance to his devotion, but an act of it. We have during Lent, in abstinence and sparseness of food, committed our bodies and souls to the LORD, to replace through grace⁴ what for His sake we withheld from nature. He to Whom we committed our weakness in Lent, will guard us equally now, that the tenderness to the body, fitted to the season, after we have dealt hardly with it, shall not hurt the soul. Let our object be the glory of God, our desire to serve Him, whether by weakness or by strength, the

⁴ "Nature does with little, grace with less."—*Bp. Wilson.*

aim of our daily life, to act in detail as children in their Father's House, and we need not fear lest we should displease Him in the indulgence, which at this glad time we thankfully accept from His Fatherly Goodness. Nor should tender and scrupulous minds mistake the cravings of the bodily frame for unruled appetite. The use of God's creatures which He provideth for us, is sanctified now by thanksgiving and charity, as abstinence from them lately was by humiliation and prayer.

But in order to maintain the religious character of our joy, we must, of course, make it an Easter joy, not leaving ourselves to the general influence of the season or the services of the Lord's Day, but seeking to live daily in the Mystery of the Resurrection, as lately in That of the Passion. Seasons which our Lord once consecrated, have His special Presence still, if with the disciples at Emmaus we seek to detain Him. His Fasting still sanctifies the forty days of our Lenten Fast ; His visits to His Disciples are still pledges that He will " visit with His salvation " in some special way during these glad forty Days, those who speak of Him by the way, or are gathered together in His Name, in lonely musings on Him, or in " Breaking of Bread," or (when this cannot often be) in devout spiritual Communion, which may be daily, or oftentimes in the day.

To aid such meditation on our Risen Lord, has been the object of the Editor in publishing this work,

not by any means to supersede the valuable helps^a which we possess, but knowing by experience the benefit and relief which many minds find in having a definite provision made for each day. Its chief excellence is its varied combination and working-in of striking passages from the fathers, and some later devotional writers.

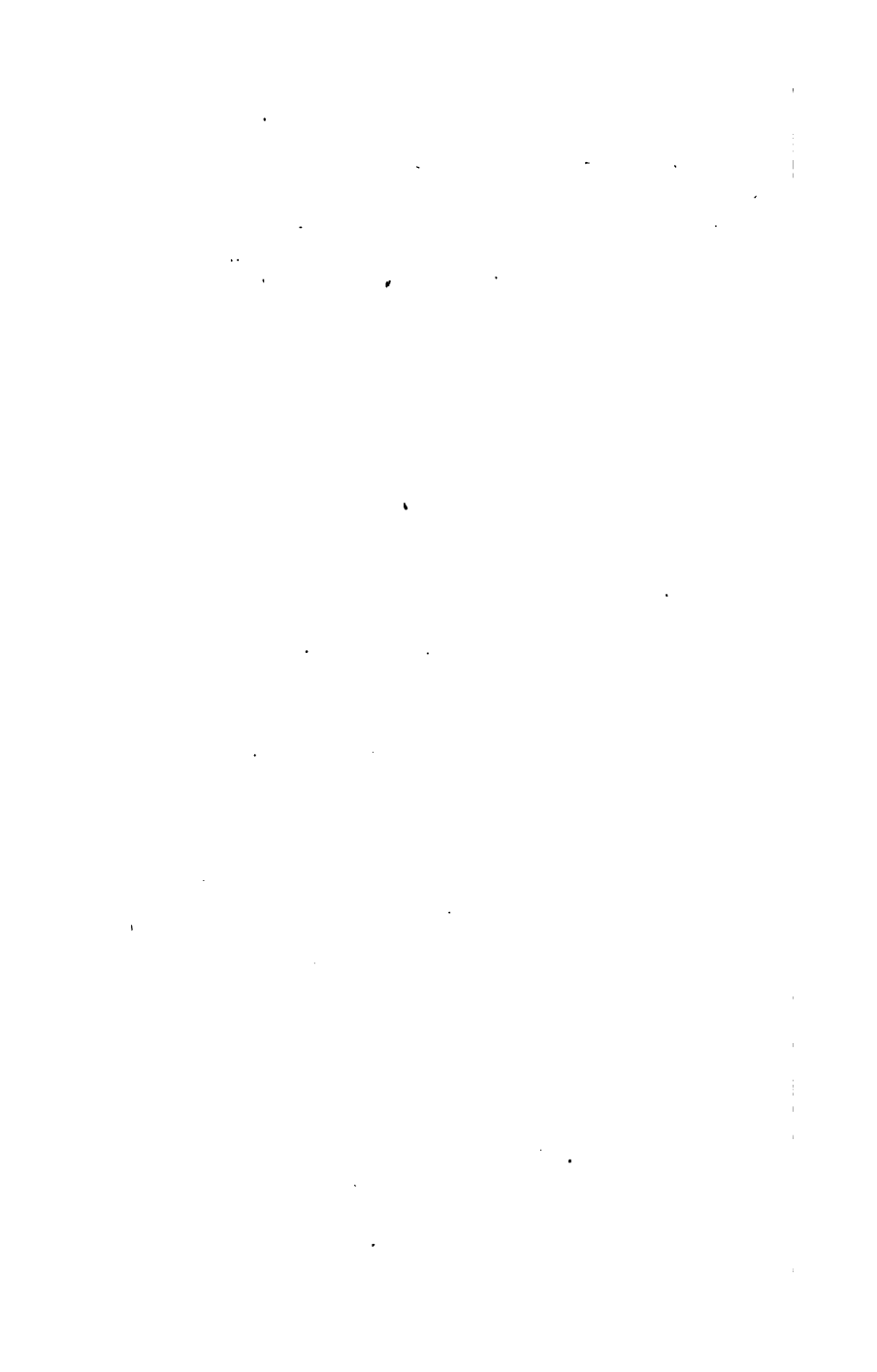
In editing this work, it may just be said that, in such passages the Editor has mostly substituted a strict translation of the original, for the looser paraphrase common in French writers. In fewer words, they seemed to him thus to have more of freshness and of strength; and he thought that in the conciser form, they would both fix themselves more in the mind, and that for the immediate object of religious meditation, individuals might gain more by dwelling upon such passages, expanding, developing, applying them, for themselves, than by simply following a paraphrase. Meditation, to be profitable, should not be a mere receiving, but a digesting, and revolving the spiritual food which has been received.

E. B. P.

Reader, if through this book
 God gibe thee holy thoughts and purposes,
 In charity pray
 For those who laboured for thee.

Easter, 1846.

^a As Bp. Andrewes' Sermons for Easter, Williams on the Resurrection, Moberly on the great forty days: much too throughout the year might be gained by a continuous meditation on the Gospels with the help of the Catena Aurea, Oxf. Tr.



THE

LIFE OF CHRIST IN GLORY

ON EARTH.

Meditation for the Day of the Resurrection.

THE GLORY OF JESUS CHRIST RISEN.

"Remember that JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead."

2 Tim. ii. 8.

FIRST POINT.

CONSIDER the glory of the Soul of JESUS CHRIST, returning victoriously from hell, and about to reunite itself to His Body. It manifesteth that glory to the whole assembly of the elect, both of the written and natural law, who accompany It in Its triumph, that they may see the exceeding greatness of His Patience and Love to man. Love so great, that He seems to have forgotten Himself in order to benefit them, giving up for them all which was His, even to His very Life. With what holy feelings of love, joy, gratitude, admiration and reverence, were those ancient patriarchs and prophets overwhelmed, when they saw the Adorable Body of their Deliverer lying in the sepulchre lifeless, and all covered with Wounds, thence conjecturing how much He had endured for their salvation! Oh with good reason did St. Bonaventure exclaim, "So much dost Thou love me, O my God, that Thou seemest

to have hated Thyself." If Thou hadst even hated Thy Sacred Humanity, couldest Thou have exposed It to greater insults and to more bitter torments than those Thou hast endured, in order to save me? O that herein I could imitate Thy incomparable Charity! When shall I love Thee so as to despise myself, to hate mine own body, to bear on my heart those loving words which Thou once didst write with Thine Hand upon the heart of St. Mechtildes, "I would rather die, O good JESU, than by the slightest fault separate myself from Thee."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the glory of JESUS CHRIST's Body at that moment when He re-unites It to His blessed Soul, and gives It life again. In resuming It, He not only freeth It from the laws of death and from the conditions of a body liable to suffering and death; but He endoweth It with the glories of eternal blessedness, and maketh Its wounds each radiant with light, with a lustrous beauty which as far surpasseth that of all the blessed, as the sun surpasseth the smallest star, whose light is eclipsed by its presence. Hence Saint Chrysologus saith with much truth, "that the glory of the Resurrection hath buried the shame of the Cross¹." Who can worthily explain the joy of JESUS's Heart, and the tender emotions of love and gratitude with which He gives thanks to His Father Who crowneth Him with so great glory? "Thou hast turned My heaviness into joy, Thou hast put off My sackcloth, and girded Me with gladness, that My glory may sing praise unto Thee. O LORD my God, I will praise Thee for ever." Who can say with what joy and

¹ *S. Chrysol. Serm. 75.*

reverence the Angels adore their King anew in His glorious second Birth, singing the same hymn which they sang in the stable of Bethlehem? Who can express the feelings of the Patriarchs who join the Angels, and with one voice repeat, again and again, this song of triumph: "Worthy is the Lamb That was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

O how largely doth God recompense the labours we endure in His service! Let us not fear to mortify our bodies. "If we suffer with CHRIST, we shall also reign with Him." For one moment of pain, an eternity of recompense! "He suffered and died, and rose; showing us, by His Passion, what we ought to endure for the truth's sake, and by His Resurrection what we ought to hope for in eternity²." What affliction will not the hope of the Resurrection soothe? Who will not banish grief, if he believe that nothing perisheth by death? Nay, the more death shorteneth the number of our days, the more it diminisheth their loss; for moment by moment well-nigh we lose some part of them. Yea, death is not the end of our life, but rather that of mortality³. He who is to rise again may not fear death. "Henceforth then, I do desire with all my strength to follow the humble Jesus; I long to embrace, in a manner, with arms of love, Him Who hath loved me, and given Himself for me; but it behoveth me to eat of the Paschal Lamb also, for if I eat not His Flesh, and drink not His Blood, that is, if I

² Christus passus et mortuus est, et resurrexit, Passione ostendens quid pro veritate tolerare, resurrectione quid in aeternitate sperare debeamus.—(*S. Aug.* l. 8. c. 49.)

³ Quem dolorem non soletur resurrectionis gratia? Quem non excludat mœrorem, si credas nihil perire morte, imò ipsius celeritate fieri, ut plus perire non possit!—(*S. Ambr. de fide resurrect.* init.)

partake not of His Passion and of His Death, I shall not have eternal life in me⁴."

THIRD POINT.

Consider the glory of His Divinity, which had been, as it were, hidden in His Passion, and which begins to shine forth in His miraculous Coming from the Tomb, like the sun bursting from behind the clouds which concealed it, and majestically diffusing around the rays of its light⁵. For He quitteth it by His Own Might, thereby showing that He has, as God, all Power over life and death. He comes forth from the Sepulchre without lifting the stone which closed its entrance, even as He came forth from His Mother's womb, without breaking the seal of her virginity, and thereby manifesting His Almightyness, Which gives to His Body the subtle nature of spirit⁶. He cometh forth from it for ever, as about to take possession of His Kingdom which shall have no end, and to sit upon the Throne of His Eternal Father, there to receive the homage of Heaven and earth, that all people should pay Him the honour due to God Alone. He cometh forth from it, as Joseph came forth from his prison to rule in Egypt, and to make his brethren, who had sold him, partakers of his happiness and glory. He cometh forth from it, as Moses came forth from the Nile to be one day a god to Pharaoh, and drown him and his hosts in

⁴ Volo totis viribus humilem sequi Jesum ; cupio eum qui dilexit me, et tradidit semetipsum pro me, quibusdam brachiis dilectionis amplecti, sed oportet me et Agnum manducare, etc.—(*S. Bern. ep. 280. ad Innoc. Pap.*)

⁵ Tempus adfuit quo sol refulsit qui prius erat in nubilo.

⁶ Cum Angelus lapidem revolvisset, reperit surrexisse Dominum, sepulcro, sicut Deum decebat, clauso relicto.—(*S. Greg. Nys. orat. 2. de Resurrect.*) So also *S. Jer. Ep. ad Hedib. q. 6. S. Chrysost. Sermon. 75. Euthym. Matt. 24. [a later] Epiph. orat. de Sepultura Christi.*

the Red Sea. He cometh forth from it, as Daniel came forth from the lions' den to be raised above the head of all his envious enemies who had planned his destruction. He cometh forth from it, as Jonas came forth from the belly of the whale to convert the Ninevites and lead them to repentance. He cometh forth from it, as Samson came forth from the city of Gaza, where he was a prisoner, carrying away the gates of the city and bearing them in triumph to the mount. He cometh forth from it victorious over Hell and over sin; and having broken all the bands of Death, as St. Leo saith, He changeth His Weakness into Power and Might, the Mortality of His Body into Eternity, and the Ignominy of His Passion into Glory and Honour⁷.

Adore the Divinity of JESUS, which manifests itself by so wondrous a miracle, and hence learn that thou must quit the tomb of thy sins, and of thine evil habits if thou wouldst reign with Him. Men must be able to say of thee: He is no longer lukewarm, full of distaste for spiritual things as he was formerly⁸. He is no longer living in that forgetfulness of God, in that wandering of the senses, and that dissipation of mind, in which he was wont to pass almost the whole day without any recollection. He is no longer living in that disquiet, those vain regrets, those frivolities, those evil tempers, and other imperfections and vicious inclinations, which were retarding his spiritual progress, and disturbing the repose of his mind.

ASPIRATIONS.

"Awake up, my glory, awake, lute and harp; I myself will awake right early." O Glorious Con-

⁷ Ruptis vinculis, mortis infirmitas in virtutem, mortalitas in aeternitatem, et contumelia transivit in gloriam.

⁸ He is not here; He hath risen.

queror of death, come forth from the dust of the tomb, "be Thou exalted above the Heavens, and let Thy Glory be above all the earth."

"Wherefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced, my flesh also shall rest in hope; because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption⁹."

Discourse for Easter Day.

"Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over Him."—Rom. vi. 9.

BEHOLD the Day of days, Day of victory and triumph, Day of glory and happiness, the greatest and most memorable Day that ever was. "This is the Day which the LORD hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it." Our heart shall sing with holy joy. O chaste Bride of the Crucified JESUS, lay aside that mourning with which thou hast covered the whole earth, to honour the funeral of thy Spouse; He is risen to die no more, "death hath no more dominion over Him."

Magdalene, dry those tears which thou sheddest over the tomb; in vain dost thou seek Him among the dead. Thou wilt find Him no longer amid ignominy, contempt, and suffering¹. Thou wilt find Him no longer amid nails and thorns and scourges. Thou wilt find Him no longer before the tribunal of judges, in the Prætorium, at the pillar, or on the Cross. Beloved disciples, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another

⁹ Ps. xvi. 10, 11.

¹ He is not here; He is risen.

as ye walk, and are sad? We trusted that it had been He Which should have redeemed Israel." Rejoice then, for your hopes are fulfilled. JESUS CHRIST is risen again, and with Him all our joys and all our hopes. O blessed Virgin, I bring thee glad tidings: thy Son is risen again, thou wilt lose Him henceforth no more: thou didst conceive Him mortal, but He is risen Immortal: "death hath no more dominion over Him²." Christian soul, behold the subject with which thou shouldest occupy thyself to-day, after the example of the first Christians, who at this season were wont to begin their visits and conversations by these words of rejoicing: "JESUS CHRIST is risen indeed." Enter then into this holy and loving thought, and consider that the Son of God, having through exceeding love subjected Himself to the pains of a bloody and ignominious Death, might not remain in the grave. What was so Great, could not be shut up in so strait a prison. It was needful that He should raise Himself from the dust of the grave, and that His innocent Flesh, torn upon Calvary, should take possession of life, with an absolute power to raise bodies and souls. And wherefore? because He had overcome death: it was for the Conqueror to give laws to the conquered, and for Him Who had triumphed over death to wear the diadem of immortality³. Kings triumph over all mortal powers; but seeing that they are themselves mortal, death in its turn doth triumph over them. It is for the Son of God Alone, Who is King for ever and ever, to triumph over death⁴. Death, which till then had been vic-

² Surrexit Christus, spes nostra.

³ Devicto mortis imperio, coronatus est diademate novæ incorruptibilitatis.—(*S. Bonav. Serm. 1. de Resur.*)

⁴ Mors mortua tunc est, in ligno quando mortua vita fuit.

torious over all men, from the slave to the monarch, which broke sceptres as reeds, and alike laid waste palaces and huts, at length found a Conqueror Who ruined its empire by three glorious victories : the first, upon the Cross ; the second, in Hell ; the third, in the Grave.

The first victory of the Son of God, was that which He gained upon the Cross ; a victory the more wonderful, in that He employed no other weapons than those which belonged to Himself, in order to contend with, and vanquish His powerful enemy. Calvary⁵ was the place of combat, where death was wont to commit the most fearful slaughter and extreme violence. Thither did it repair with a formidable retinue, surrounded by soldiers and executioners, armed with scourges, thorns, spear, and Cross, irresistible weapons, hoping to bear Him away by main force, and make Him feel its power with greater shame and suffering. The Son of God, on the contrary, repaired thither Alone, helpless, unarmed, not willing even to use the privileges of His Beatitude, nor the power of His Divinity : but, by a marvellous stratagem, He disarmed death, which marvelled to see itself fixed to the Cross, whereon it had nailed Him, pierced with the spear with which it had pierced His Side ; weakened with His Languor, borne down with the weight of His Torments, wounded with His Wounds, which to it were more deadly than to Him⁶. Saint Ambrose says, "that the dragon is

⁵ Mors et vita duello
Confluxere mirando,
Dux vitæ mortuus
Regnat vivus.

⁶ Factum est perindè atque in singulari certamine. Mortem percussit Christus primùm percussus, postremò mortem interemit ; mors a mortuo destructa et enecata est corpore, quæ videbatur immortalis.—(*S. Isid. Pelusiot. lib. 2. ep. 192.*)

parched with a continual thirst, which leads him by a natural instinct to seek a remedy in the blood of the elephant, which he draws from a vein in the foot," according to this excellent father. But the elephant, by a contrary instinct which nature gives him for the preservation of his life, knowing that his enemy is watching him, puts himself upon the defensive so soon as he perceives him; and after long resistance, places himself against the trunk of a tree, and allows his blood to be drawn, until feeling his strength fail, he falls upon the dragon, and crushing him to the earth by the weight of his body, thus purchases victory at the cost of his life.

Death is a pitiless monster, burning with a raging thirst for our blood. What torrents, yea, deluges thereof hath it not shed since the beginning of the world, and yet remains unsatisfied! It spares none; it makes no distinction of age, sex, or rank; it approaches even the Incarnate Word; opens His Veins; draws forth all His Blood; but instead of finding new strength thereby, it There finds its poison. What is the poison of death?—Innocence, Blessedness, Life. Death thought to attack a malefactor, it finds in Him the Holy of Holies, and the very flower of Innocence⁷. It thought to combat only a man of sorrows, subject to the sufferings and miseries common to men; it finds in Him the King of Glory, and the Fount of Blessedness Itself, bidden under the infirmities of His Flesh. It thought to overcome a mortal man only; it finds in Him the Immortal God, the Source of Life. "He hath Life," says Saint Augustine. "He is Life, and is what He hath." "He hath Life in His Divinity", He

⁷ Super ipsum...effloreat sanctificatio mea.—Psalm cxxxi. 18. Vulg.

⁸ Dominus semper vivit; sed ut occideret mortem, vestitus est morte; non enim potuit mors mori, nisi in vitâ. Non

hath It in His Humanity ; He is Life in Himself, He is the Life of all men." To use the terms of Theology, He is final Life, meritorious Life, exemplary Life, original Life, objective Life ? What follows ?

It follows, that Blessedness destroyeth the pains of death ; Innocence taketh away its sting, even sin, wherein consisteth all its strength. His Life appearing suddenly through His Wounds, was about to complete its destruction : but death seeing itself disarmed in this first combat, takes flight, and leaving the field of battle to the Conqueror, withdraws into hell, where it thought to be in security. For there it had an absolute power, holding the greatest monarchs of the world beneath its sway. Even Patriarchs, Prophets, and the most faithful servants of God were his prisoners of war, were languishing in prison, sighing for their liberty.

The SAVIOUR of the world, Who would not let His enemy escape Him, follows up His Victory, resolved to break open the prisons of death, and to take from him his prey despite the efforts of the devils, who were interested in his defence. So jealous is He of the glory of this second triumph, that He seems to forget for a time the sacred spoils of His Body, Which He leaves upon the Cross separated from His Soul, but not from His Divinity, Which sustains It and preserves It from corruption ; whilst His victorious Spirit goes without delay into Hades, the more promptly to execute His design, and hasten the defeat of death. Hear the Conqueror's sentence on the fugitives : " O death, I will be thy plague ; O grave, I will be thy destruction ". How moritur amaritudo, nisi in dulcedine ; non moritur frigus, nisi in calore ; non est mortua mors, nisi in vitâ. Quid est vita ? Christus noster, sed vita induta erat mortem. Crucifixus est, occisus est, et resurrexit.—(Serm. 315 in App. S. Aug.)

* Hosea xiii. 14.

beautiful are these words ! It sometimes happens that a noted robber, accustomed to theft from his earliest years, ventures to enter the palace of the prince, and to lay hands upon some article of value. But being discovered, is tortured, and is obliged to confess his crimes and make satisfaction, not only for the last, but also for those which he had committed from his youth¹.

In like manner death, ever since the creation of the world, had not ceased to commit thefts innumerable, robbing and pillaging in every corner of the earth, sparing none : and being of a sanguinary nature, it was not content with spoiling men of their goods, it sought also to have their lives, and to be mistress of their bodies and souls. These thefts were numberless ; but as death attacked none but sinners and criminals, it still went on exercising its tyranny with impunity. At length, having carried its insolence to such a height, as to enter the royal mansion and attack the King's Son, it is now justly compelled to restore with shame what it had plundered with injustice. This "glorious and terrible Conqueror"² hath no sooner descended into the region of darkness and death, than He bringeth at once Paradise into Hades, and terror into Hell.

What confusion to the devils, who tremble like owls in the presence of this Sun, and are quite dazzled at the splendour of Its Light ! "Who ever saw," say they, "such a guest in these regions ? Hell never beheld the like, the world never before cast such an one into our dungeons. He is not a debtor, but a Creditor ; not a captive, but the Deliverer of captives ; He appears not as a suppliant, but as a Judge ; He comes not to serve, but to command ; not to abide

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 1.

² Depredator splendidus et terribilis.—(*Serm.* 160 in *App. S. Aug.*)

in our prisons, but to set our prisoners free³. If He were a criminal, He would not be so Mighty ; if He were defiled with sin, He would not shed such light around. But if He be God, what doth He here ? If He be man only, who giveth Him power to enter here ? If He be living, what doth He in the grave ? If He be really dead, how maketh He the dead to go forth from hence ? Hath He not overcome the prince of darkness ? But He hath been nailed to the Cross. It is, indeed, true ; and yet His Cross layeth waste our empire, His Cross troubleth all our joy, destroyeth our hopes, and is the source of our woes."

If the despair of the devils be exceeding great, not less great is the joy of the Patriarchs and Prophets, who were in Hades, "sitting in the shadow of death," as saith the Scripture, and buried during so many ages in the blackness of the abyss. How great was the joy of those blessed captives, when they saw their Deliverer enter their prisons, to "break the gates of brass," and remove the children of light from the children of darkness ! Rejoice, holy souls, and bless the Author of your liberty ; sing new songs, yea make the lowest pit resound with His praise⁴. Adam, behold the Tree of Life which shall repair all thy loss ! Abel, behold the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world !" Isaac, behold the victim which has taken thy place upon Mount Moriah ! Jacob, behold thy mystic Ladder which shall lead thee into Heaven ! Moses, behold the Manna of the desert, and the miraculous rod, which divided the Red Sea that thou mightest go through !

³ Nunquam talem noster excepit Tartarus, nunquam in nostram cavernam talem invomuit mundus. Invasor iste, non debitor ; exactor est, non precator ; judicem videmus, non supplicem ; venit jubere, non succumbere ; eripere, non manere. — (*Ibid.* from Eus. Hom. i. de Pasch.)

⁴ Psalm cxlix. 1.

Joshua, behold the Sun Which standeth still, that It may give thee the light of blessedness! Isaiah, behold the fruitful "rod out of the stem of Jesse!" Jeremy, behold "the Man of Sorrows Who hath borne our iniquities!" O Prophets! behold the Messiah Whom ye proclaimed so long before His coming! O glorious Conqueror of Death! who will henceforth refuse to visit the darkest prisons, since Thou Thyself disdainest not to visit the gloomy caves of hell? O Heavenly Lamb! come into the prison of our hearts, descend through the Communion into these dark dungeons, loose the bands of our sins and of our evil habits: grant that my soul, which is but a dreary chaos by reason of its disorderly passions, may become a paradise through Thy dear Presence; and I will offer Thee "the sacrifice of praise" and thanksgiving for ever⁵.

Death, ashamed to see itself thus despoiled of its greatest wealth, and of the most considerable portion of its property, by the loss of this second victory, now thought only of going to hide itself in the graves amid dust and ashes. That was the only place left to it, which Tertullian calls "the asylum of death⁶," because it had till then been so strongly entrenched, that no one had as yet been able to dislodge it. True, indeed, it is, that the Prophet Elijah and his disciple Elisha had forced it to come out thence for a little while, by raising to life two children whom it had carried off sooner than they would. But it quickly recovered its rights, and with usury, avenging itself of the insult it had sustained upon those very persons who had dared to achieve this enterprise. So that this would have been a most favourable place for its retreat, had it had to deal only with a man like other men; for their

⁵ Psalm cxvi. 17.

⁶ Apol. c. 37.

power extends not to the grave ; their wisdom seeth not into the shades of death ; holiness itself, which renders their souls incorruptible, saveth not their bodies from the corruption of the grave. But in vain would it resist the efforts of Infinite Power, Supreme Wisdom, and Uncreated Holiness, Which the SON of GOD employed in this third combat, in order to make His Triumph more glorious. Samson, finding himself shut up in the city of Gaza, tore away the gates of the town by night, laid them upon his shoulders, and bore them in triumph to the top of a neighbouring hill. Hell and the grave are the two prisons of death : in the former, it thought to shut up the Soul of the SON of GOD, and in the latter His Body : but it perceived not that together with Them it shut up the Godhead also, Which is the very Fount of Life. The Soul was separated from the Body, and the Body from the Soul ; but neither the Body nor the Soul were separated from the Divinity⁷. When a valiant man draws his sword to attack his enemy, the sword is no longer in the scabbard, and the scabbard is no longer with the sword, yet both belong to the wearer ; the scabbard hangs by the side, the sword is in the hand of him who wields it. In like manner, the Soul of the Saviour of the world, when in hell, was separated from His Body, and in this state, St. Thomas Aquinas says, that "JESUS CHRIST during this separation, ceased to be Man, but He was still God, and His Godhead Which sustained His Body and Soul, gave to Both victorious strength to overthrow the empire of death. Oh marvel of marvels ! At the same time that His Blessed Spirit bursts open the gates of hell, and robs it of its prisoners, His Body triumphs over the grave ; and by a miracle never before seen,

⁷ Quod semel assumpsit, nunquam dimisit.

He despoileth Himself of His mortality, He leaveth the dust, He ascendeth the mountain, He raiseth Himself to Heaven, maketh Himself higher than the Angels, and taketh His seat upon His Father's Throne^a. Dost thou not admire the newness of this prodigy? The grave is a dreary place, where the light of day never enters; and the Saviour of the world comes forth from it as a Sun: His Tomb is the morning Dawn which brings forth the Light, and if I may so say, it is not Heaven which gives day-light to the earth, but the earth which gives a Light in Heaven^b. The grave is an abode where our bodies are eaten by worms, and turned to corruption; and JESUS CHRIST comes forth from it full of Strength and Beauty. His Head, Which had borne a crown of thorns, is crowned with a diadem of light; His Eyes, Which had been blinded by His Own Blood, are lighted with beatific fire and brightness; His Feet and Hands are inlaid with His Wounds, Which are now abiding Marks of His goodness, after having borne the extremest cruelty and inhumanity of men. O how blessed is the sight of the crystal of His Sacred Side; the rubies and diamonds of His loving Wounds; the bright beams of the scourges which He received upon His Shoulders, and the Glory of His Head, upon Which seems to rest all the brightness of the whole heavens. The world appears renewed by His Presence, nature revived, the heavens more serene, the sun more brilliant, the elements more pure and refined, Palestine more beautiful than ever; the very "mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like young

^a Ablatis portis mortis, ascendit in cacumen montis.—(S. Aug. *Serm.* 108. *de temp.*)

^b Dies iste magis de sepulcro refulsit, quam de sole radiavit.—(Cassarius, *Serm.* 1. *de Pasch.*)

sheep¹." The grave is the goal where ends all the power of kings, who show their strength during life, and their weakness in death². They who are only great in wickedness, after having made much noise, are no sooner laid in the grave than this great tumult ceases: and their memory is buried in the coffin, where, of all those vain phantoms of grandeur, nothing remains to them but a little dust and ashes. But the Son of God, on the contrary, begins to reign by death, and as a token of His Power, makes the earth to quake as He rises from the grave. The Angel descends from Heaven, and rolling away the stone which closed the sepulchre, sits thereon, to show the immoveable security of the happy state of Resurrection. The guards, beholding His "countenance like lightning, and His raiment white as snow," fall to the ground, trembling and shaking, and "become as dead men;" and then recovering themselves, and seeing the stone rolled away, the sepulchre empty, "the linen clothes lying," their prisoner free, they look at one another as persons under enchantment, who would gladly take flight to the world's end, in order to be rid of the fear that has fallen upon them. Who can tell the astonishment of the rulers of the synagogue on beholding these men returning in confusion to relate the wonders they had seen? Must not Caiaphas have feared, lest the Dead now risen should come and reproach him with his injustice? Must not Herod have blushed with shame for having "set at nought" the Conqueror of the grave and of death? Pilate, when calling to mind the conversation he had had with Him, must he not have lamented his cowardice in abandoning innocence which he had himself acknowledged, and which he saw confirmed by such great wonders? Must not the whole city of Jerusalem

¹ Ps. cxiv. 6.

² Job iii. 17.

have been moved at the report of so unexpected a miracle, and at the sight of so many dead, who, as Holy Scripture affirms, "appeared unto many?" If to-morrow in London, we were to see a hundred graves open, and as many dead rise and enter the houses of their friends, and appear now to one, now to another, during the space of forty days, what a tumult would not such a sight cause throughout the whole city, both among high and low! Was ever any subject more discussed in the pulpit, in the fashionable world, in public assemblies, and in private society, than this would be? Now, think ye that it was otherwise in the city of Jerusalem, which was one of the greatest cities in the world, filled with a vast concourse of people who had gone thither for the feast of the Passover, in whose sight so many "graves were" suddenly "opened," according to the testimony of Scripture, and so many dead arose to life, spreading around such visible and wonderful tokens of the Resurrection?

Of a truth, greater was the victory over death, in that (in the words of S. Gregory) "He Who willed not to come down from the Cross, rose from the grave. For it was a greater deed to rise from the grave, than to come down from the Cross; a greater deed was it to destroy death by rising, than to preserve life by coming down³." The Life which He would have preserved was a mortal Life. He took our Flesh with all its sinless infirmities, and so, like ours, liable to decay. We begin to die so soon as we begin to live; death and life move as it were with an even pace, and what one gives us, the other almost as soon takes from us. But it is quite other-

³ Qui de cruce descendere noluit, de sepulcro surrexit. Plus igitur fuit de sepulcro surgere, quam de cruce descendere; plus fuit mortem resurgendo destruere, quam vitam conservando conservare.—(*S. Greg. Hom. 82, 1.*)

wise in the Person of the Son of God. At the moment when He begins to die, He draws nigh unto Life; His Passion is the path to His Resurrection; His Death is not so much the end of His Life as of His Mortality, and the passage to a wondrous Life, which exceeds His suffering and mortal Life in happiness, and is very like unto His Eternal and Glorious Life. In His temporal Birth, He is born of a Mother without a father; in His Resurrection from the grave He is "without father and without mother." In His Eternal Birth, He proceeds from an Immortal Source, and thence derives an Immortal Life⁴; in His temporal Birth, He proceeds from a mortal source, and thence derives a Life liable to death and suffering; in His Resurrection from the grave, He issues from the very womb of death, and like the phoenix, derives thence the source of life⁵. In His Eternal Birth, He receives a quickening Life; in His temporal Birth, He receives a dying Life; in His Rising from the grave He finds a quickening Death; and, as says S. Chrysologus, "The sepulchre which had conceived and borne Him dead within its womb, brings Him forth Living and Glorious⁶." In His Eternal Birth, He is 'LIGHT of LIGHT.' In His temporal Birth, He is a 'Light shining in darkness.' In His second Birth from the tomb, He passeth from darkness to light. As was the darkness of His Passion, such is the Brightness of His Resurrection⁷; as was the cruelty of the thorns, such is the Diadem of His Immortality; as was the weight of His Cross, such is the Agility of His Glorious Body; as was the

⁴ A principio vivente in similitudinem viventis.

⁵ Surgit ab antro sepulcri rediviva caro phœnicis, quam cinnamomum deduxerat pietatis.—(S. Aug.)

⁶ Uteri nova forma concipit mortuum, parit vivum.—(S. Chrys. Serm. vii. 4.)

⁷ The darkness and light are both alike.—Ps. cxxxix. 12.

ghastliness of His torn and bleeding Members, such is the Glory which surrounds Him, and the bright Light which sparkles from His Wounds.

CONCLUSION.

If this indeed be true, what joy should not the bare recollection of so glorious a Triumph cause to the soul which loves its Saviour? What pleasure did Esther feel, when she saw Haman fixed to the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai! What joy did Jacob feel, when they came to tell him that his son Joseph, whose death he had so long mourned, was yet alive, and was all-powerful in Egypt! At the first tidings thereof, his "heart fainted within him;" in that sweet transport he could only utter those words so full of overflowing tenderness; "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive"; "I complain no more of the ills I have endured, I regret no more the tears I have shed; I fear no more the misfortunes which may befall me; if I see him once more before I die, I shall die content. What then have we henceforth to desire, now that the Saviour of our souls hath come forth from the grave, and hath overcome death? If we have mourned His Death, must we not rejoice in His Resurrection? if we have shared His Sorrows, must we not share the Glory of His Triumph? Figure to thyself a victorious conqueror, returning from battle, and entering the chief city of his kingdom: "He never could have conquered," says Saint Augustine, "had He not first fought: the more severe and dangerous the combat, the greater the joy in victory." "Represent to thyself," says the same father, "a vessel laden with riches and precious merchandize, overtaken by a violent tempest at the end of her voyage. The winds rise in

^a Gen. xlv. 28.

furious strength, the sea swells, and wave rolls upon wave ; the roaring billows open the sides of the ship, the storm bursts howling over-head, the countenances of all within bear a death-like hue. Some hide themselves in the hold of the ship ; others, more courageous, go to the pilot to receive his orders ; others give themselves to prayer. Nevertheless, the pilot loses neither judgment nor courage ; provides for all, and forgets nothing which art can suggest, in order to guard those who have committed themselves to his guidance. During this general distress and fear, if the sun bursts forth and dispels the storm, if the sea becomes calm, if the winds abate and cause the tempest to cease, who can describe the joy of the sailors, and the cries of gladness which they raise to Heaven ? ” This is but a rude outline of that which now takes place. “ The Church,” says Saint Chrysostome, “ is as a vessel which bears us on towards eternity. The mariners are the Apostles ; the faithful, the passengers crossing the stormy sea of this world ; the Son of God enters it as the Pilot, and with admirable skill steers it during the course of His Life ; but at the end of His voyage, He is overtaken by a furious tempest, His disciples forsake Him, His enemies persecute Him, His friends grieve Him by their presence ; all creatures seem to have conspired His ruin as by one common plot and consent. Nevertheless, He is not troubled ; with a firm Heart He ascends Calvary, and from the height of the Cross perceiving a number of captives confined in hell, He descends into its depths, and having freed them from their prisons, He lands safely at the haven of the

⁹ The conquering commander triumpheth ; yet had he not conquered unless he had fought ; and the more peril in the battle, the more joy in the triumph. A storm tosses the sailors ; all wax pale at approaching death ; sky and sea are calmed ; exceeding is their joy, for exceeding was their fear.

grave, where He taketh up the Precious Spoils of His Body, and decketh It with the rays of an Immortal Brightness." What joy for the Blessed Virgin! What comfort for the Apostles! What delight for us, who have so lately seen Him expire amid such suffering and grief! Ought we not to say, with Job¹, "It is enough for me to know that JESUS my REDEEMER liveth." Too much of bliss for me! But whither doth this thought carry me away? Oh! my soul, let us moderate the excess of our joy!

Verily, could I yet wish for any thing, after the glorious Victory which the SON of GOD this day gains over death, rising again gloriously in our souls by means of penitence, I would ask of GOD that this blessed state might be as steadfast in its duration as it is perfect in its beauty. O Glorious Resurrection of Christ's mystical Body, from sin to grace, from death to life, if this life were no more subject to death, and if sin found no longer any place in our hearts whereby to exclude grace! But, alas! how short will be the duration of our joy, and how soon will our triumphs be changed into sad subjects for lamentation and complaint! Whilst the Prophet Ezekiel was prophesying in an open valley, and the Spirit of the LORD was breathing from the four quarters of the earth, all the Israelites arose from their graves; their bones were seen coming forth from the bowels of the earth, and "coming together, bone to his bone;" binding themselves with sinews, covering themselves with veins, arteries, and flesh, and "standing up upon their feet, an exceeding great army²;" but this miraculous sight quickly disappeared, and these dry bones re-entered the earth even as before, and sank into their graves. Thus, whilst the SAVIOUR of the world is in Agony upon Calvary,

¹ Job xix. 25.

² Ezek. xxxvii. 7. 10.

and His Divine Spirit is flowing through all the members of His Church, sinners rise from the grave of their crimes, and abstain for a few days from their evil doings: the haunts of debauchery are closed, words of revenge are no longer heard; blasphemies cease; the Church, by a wondrous change, seems formidable to the devils like an army in array; but too soon these quickened dead, by falling back into their accustomed wickedness, lose the life which they had gained through the Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST. They have no sooner kept their Easter Festival, than they forget their resolutions, and resuming that lewdness and miserable license to sin, for which they had a holy hatred, they become wicked, voluptuous, sensual, and vindictive, even as before.

We must think seriously of this, and be careful that this misery befall us not, and that it be not said of us, that we are raised from the dead like Lazarus, to be bound still with grave-clothes. "JESUS CHRIST being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him³." What follows thence, Oh divine Apostle? "Wherefore," saith he, "reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through JESUS CHRIST⁴." Let us engrave these two important truths in our hearts, like two firm pillars whereon to rest our faithfulness, like the two pillars of Solomon's Temple, one of which was called Truth, the other Strength. JESUS CHRIST is no longer subject to Death: this is the pillar of truth, whereon we ought to "establish" our constancy. Therefore we must never again fall back into sin, which is the death of our soul: this is the pillar of strength which shall be crowned with glory. If then we would that our joy be perfect, let us not say, "It is enough for me if

³ Rom. vi. 9.

⁴ Rom. vi. 11.

my LORD liveth;" it is not enough to see Him in possession of an Immortal Life, if ours be not, like unto His, exempt from the arrows of death, and the wounds of sin. It is not enough for Him, it is not enough for us. He hath need of us, I make bold to say it, and we have need of Him. He is our King, and "of His kingdom there will be no end;" His subjects must therefore be immortal. He is our Head, not passible and dead, but Blessed for ever; His members then, must needs be living, in order to partake of His influences. Did He not associate us in His Glory, His designs were not accomplished; did He not make us happy, He were not satisfied; and as His Glory is the source of our happiness, so does our happiness contribute to His Glory and Pleasure. We can no longer then, sever ourselves from Him without ruining our own interests, and wounding the tenderness of His Love. We are too closely bound to His Person, both by faith which unites our understanding to His Divine Wisdom, by hope which binds us to the Sovereign Good, by charity which links our hearts to His Divine Perfections, by the Communion of His Body Which we have received, and by the oath of fidelity which we first made in Baptism, and have ratified so often in words of penitence. Thou hast plighted thy word not upon the grave of the dead, but upon the Book of the living⁵; thou canst not retract. It was asked of thee if thou didst "renounce the world and the devil," and thou didst answer, "I renounce them all," not only in the presence of men, but also before God and the Angels, Who wrote thy name in the book of life⁶; and hav-

⁵ Tenetur vox tua, non in tumultu mortuorum, sed in libro viventium.—(*S. Amb. de iis qui initiantur*, c. 2.)

⁶ Non hominibus sed Deo et angelis conscribentibus dixisti: Abrenuntio.

ing unhappily effaced this by thy frequent falls, thou didst solemnly promise before the Priest who gave thee absolution, that thou wouldest return no more to thine evil ways. Thou didst either intend to keep thy promise, or thou didst not; if thou didst not, thou hast profaned the Ordinance; thou art guilty of sacrilege; if thou didst, thou art a traitor, to violate thy faith, despite the respect thou owest thy Master. Furious beasts are bound with iron chains; but a man of honour is only bound by his word. Therefore, if thou art wanting in fidelity, thou hast neither honour nor conscience; thou hast no longer any share in JESUS CHRIST, nor any rank among the Saints; thou must place thyself among the monsters of nature. For what more monstrous than to see a dead limb attached to a living and glorious Head? To begin by virtue and to end by vice; to begin by penitence, and to end by a relapse; to undertake one's conversion, and to fall again forthwith into a dissolute life, is a monstrous thing, a frightful disorder in grace⁷. "It is a chimera which hath the head of a man and the body of a beast⁸."

Let us then, with the great Apostle, conclude with these Divine words: JESUS CHRIST hath died for me, yea, He has risen again, He is at the Right Hand of His Father, God. He maketh intercession for me. Who then shall separate me from His Love⁹? Shall tribulation? My SAVIOUR being the fount of blessedness, I cannot be miserable, unless I will it. Shall distress, weariness, the difficulties which hinder my intentions? My SAVIOUR is Almighty, and the Fire of His Love, which expands my heart, overthrows

⁷ Bonum inchoare, et malo fine concludere, quid aliud est, quam res monstruosas facere!—(*Serm. 8. ad frat. in eremo.*)

⁸ Illa enim actio quasi chimæra est, quæ initium habet a ratione, et finem a sensualitate.

⁹ Rom. viii. 34, 35.

every obstacle. Shall famine? I have received the Bread of Life, Which is the Food of my soul. Shall nakedness? The grace of my SAVIOUR wherewith I am re-clothed can only be taken from me through my own listlessness. Shall the fear of peril? What can I fear, since CHRIST JESUS is my Defender, Who covereth me with His protection as with a shield? Shall persecution? That is to me the cause of blessedness, and the source of my glory. Shall the sword of tyrants? It may indeed separate the soul from the body, but it cannot take from me the life of the soul. It is true that the Cross, and sufferings, and persecutions, and death, are the portion of those Christians who profess to follow after virtue; but the Love of JESUS CHRIST maketh us more than conquerors over all these ills, and "I am persuaded that neither life, death, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor evil things present, nor perils to come, nor violence, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from my God." O Great Saint, how few believers are capable of so generous a feeling! In other times, racks and extremest torments could not shake the constancy of Martyrs; but now there needs neither Cross nor prisons to shake our fidelity: a word, a look, a thought of man's opinion, carries us away, and makes us forget our strongest resolutions. O (my dear reader), think seriously of this, and since thou hast come forth from the tomb, act so that thou mayest be found there no more. "He is risen, He is not here." Frequent no more, scenes of debauchery, nor gaming, nor dangerous society. Let no blasphemous nor dissolute words, nor scandalous discourse, nor lewd conversation be any more heard from thee. Remember that thou hast promised to GOD to change thy life and thy ways; that in virtue of this promise He has given thee His Body and Blood,

with the possession of His Grace, and that upon the preservation of so great a blessing depends thine eternal salvation; that if thou lose it by a shameful relapse, it may be thou wilt never recover it. Finally, to sum up all in one word, be assured that perseverance is the spring of thy bliss, and if thou lackest it, thou must perish irretrievably. An ancient orator being asked what was the first part of eloquence, replied, "that it was delivery; the second delivery; the third delivery." But if thou ask me what is the first virtue of a Christian, I tell thee that it is perseverance; the second perseverance; the third perseverance; and wert thou to ask me the same question a hundred times, a hundred times would I give thee the same answer: nay, could my voice reach to the four quarters of the globe, I would never be weary of repeating again and again, persevere in the service of God, persevere in His Grace, persevere in His Love. For if thou observe not the law of combat, which is perseverance unto death, thou wilt not be crowned in eternity ¹.

¹ Hoc tibi ad ultimum dico: Persevera, persevera, persevera. Nam non coronabitur, nisi qui legitime certaverit.

Meditation for Easter Monday.

UPON THE GENERAL RESURRECTION OF GLO- RIFIED BODIES, AFTER THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

“Remember that JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead.”
2 Tim. ii. 8.

FIRST POINT.

CONSIDER that as the Death of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the meritorious cause of the general resurrection of all glorified bodies, so His Resurrection is the pattern of their resurrection.

“The hour is coming,” He Himself said in the Gospel, “in the which all that are in the grave shall hear the Voice of the SON of GOD, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation¹.” The reprobate shall come forth from their graves with bodies hideous and horrible to behold; the blessed, on the contrary, will come forth with bodies more glorious than the sun. For the SAVIOUR of the world, as saith Saint Paul, will “change their vile” and low estate, and will make them like unto His Own Glorious Body, as It came forth from the Sepulchre on the Day of the Resurrection². Saint Vincent Ferrier says, that if

¹ John v. 28, 29.

² Ad Phil. iii. 20, 21.

God were to put in the heavens a glorified body in the place of the sun, it would give more light to the world than doth that beauteous luminary. What then will it be to see all the glorious bodies of the elect rising from the earth, more brilliant than suns, and forming altogether a light more beautiful than ever hath been? Oh! how truly will it then be said, "This is the Day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it³." "Thy dead shall live, Mine elect who have suffered death shall arise from the dead: awake and sing, and bless the Lord, ye that dwell in the dust⁴."

"The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Behold! I show you a mystery: we shall all be raised, but we shall not all be changed⁵." That blessedness is only for the elect. The wicked will not be raised gloriously at the day of judgment, they will have no place in the assembly of the just. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," and beholdeth them with favour; "but the way of the ungodly shall perish⁶." They shall all come forth from their graves, they shall all awake from the sleep of death, but their end will be very different. "Some shall awake to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt⁷."

Among which of these will ye be, oh children of men? How long will ye have your hearts weighed down to

³ Psalm cxviii.

⁴ Isaiah xxvi. 19.

⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 40—44. 51. There is great authority for this reading, although that in favour of the present Greek text, followed by our version, preponderates, "We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed," i. e. as S. Chrysostome says, "even those bodies which die not, must be changed and transformed into incorruption."—[Ed.]

⁶ Psalm i.

⁷ Daniel xii. 2.

earth? "How long will ye have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after lying?" Know ye not that CHRIST is indeed risen; that God hath made His Holy One to be admired of all His Saints, and that ye yourselves shall hereafter rise, like unto Him, to a life of glory, if ye be holy as He is holy? If ye so love this present life, which is so short and wretched, how ought ye to long after that life which is eternal and full of bliss! Why do ye love rather to enjoy for a moment an apparent and deceitful joy, than to be truly happy for ever? Why prefer ye the pleasure of a moment, to a glory which is eternal?*

SECOND POINT.

Consider the suitableness, the certainty, and the infallibility of the general Resurrection of the dead. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Weigh these words, "the dead shall be raised;" for as our "bodies," as Saint Paul saith, are the very "members of CHRIST," and "CHRIST is our Head;" so the Head must not be separated from Its body. It is meet, indeed, that It should enter the first into glory; but Its members must needs follow It¹. "Whither the glory of the Head hath gone before, thither is called also the hope of the body." "Blessed be God, even the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who, according to His abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a

* *Cur potius esse vultis ad momentum fucati, quàm in æternum beati; ad momentum libidinosi, quàm in æternum gloriosi?*

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 53.

¹ Quo enim præcessit gloria capitis, eo vocatur et spes corporis.—(*S. Leo, ser. i. de Ascens.*)

lively hope by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead²." It is this hope which sustains us, and makes us ever bear about in our bodies the Death of the LORD JESUS, that so the Life also of JESUS may appear in our bodies; knowing that He Who hath raised up JESUS, shall raise up us also by JESUS³. And this must be so, because our bodies are the temples of the HOLY GHOST. If the Spirit of Him That raised up JESUS from the dead dwell in you, He That raised up CHRIST JESUS from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit That dwelleth in you⁴. It must needs be so, because our mortal bodies are united by the Holy Communion to the Immortal Body of JESUS CHRIST. "If then, by His touch alone, He raised the dead, how," says Saint Cyril⁵, "should we not also live who eat His Flesh and drink His Blood?" How can any deny that our flesh is capable of receiving the gift of God, which is eternal life, being nourished with the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST, and being a member of Him⁶? Doubt not He will give immortality to those who partake of His Body. He Himself gives us this assurance in the Gospel: saying, "He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me⁷."

It must needs be so. For as our bodies labour conjointly with the spirit for eternal life; so it is meet that they should partake thereof. "Those who labour together in the work, may not be separated in the reward⁸." "Without the body," says St. Cyril, "we

² 1 Pet. i. 3.

³ 2 Cor. iv. 14.

⁴ Rom. viii. 11.

⁵ "If by the sole touch of His Holy Flesh the decayed is restored to life, how shall not we find That Life-giving Eucharist a richer Treasure when we taste It!"—(*S. Cyril* ii. 4, in *Joan*. vi. 54.)

⁶ *S. Irenæus*, v. 2, 3, and iv. 18, 5.

⁷ John vi. 57.

⁸ Non possunt separari in mercede, quos opera conjungit.—(*Tertull. de carnis Resur.*)

do nothing, neither good nor evil⁹. If we blaspheme the Name of God, it is done with the mouth, and if we sing His praises, it is done with the mouth likewise. If we steal, we steal with the hand, and if we give alms, we give with the hand likewise. It is then reasonable that the body be punished with the spirit, if it be partner in its crimes; and that it be recompensed with it, if with it, it hath done well.

Learn thence, that if thou wouldest acquire a lawful right to the glorious Resurrection, thou must keep thyself closely united to JESUS CHRIST, thou must live according to His Spirit, partake often of the Divine Mysteries with due reverence, and employ all the strength of thy body in the practice of good works. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God¹."

THIRD POINT.

Consider the joy and consolation arising from this steadfast hope of the Resurrection. We shall change, not our nature, but our condition and estate: this is the hope and consolation of the Saints, in their labours and sufferings². Our tears shall be turned into joy, our troubles into delight, our wants into abundance, our confusion into glory, our death into life eternal. This was the hope of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," that I shall rise again at the last day, that I shall be again clothed with my own flesh, and in my flesh shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, in mine own body. Yea, mine eyes shall behold Him, and this hope which I preserve in my soul, is my only consolation in my sufferings. This was the hope of the Maccabees, whom king

⁹ S. Cyril. Hieros. catech. 18, 19. p. 249. O. T.

¹ Rom. xii. 1.

² Immutabimur; hæc est spes et consolatio sanctorum.

Antiochus caused to be cruelly tormented, in order to make them forsake the faith of their fathers. For the second among them being at the last gasp, said to the tyrant: "Thou, like a fury, takest us out of this present life, but the King of the World shall raise us up, who have died for His laws, unto everlasting life." The third, putting out his tongue, and holding forth his hands to the executioners to be cut off, said courageously, "These I had from Heaven; and for His laws I despise them, since from Him I hope to receive them again³." The fourth, when ready to die, addressed himself to the tyrant, and said thus, "It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God to be raised up again by Him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life⁴." This was the hope of Saint Monica, who being asked, "Whether she was not grieved to die so far from her own country," gently replied, "Nothing is far from God; nor is it to be feared, lest at the end of the world, He should not know whence to raise me up⁵." This was the hope of the Martyrs who so courageously exposed their lives, knowing that not a hair of their heads would fall, which should not be restored to them at the Day of Judgment. Finally, it is the hope of all the righteous, who with one consent say with St. Peter, "We, according to His promise, look for new Heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness⁶."

ASPIRATIONS AND EXERCISES DURING THE DAY.

Acts of faith.—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth⁷."

³ 2 Mac. vii. 9. 11.

⁵ S. Aug. Conf. l. ix. c. 11.

⁷ Job xix. 25.

⁴ Ib. 14.

⁶ 2 Pet. iii. 13.

Acts of hope.—"JESUS CHRIST is risen again from the dead, I hope that one day He will raise me up." In this hope I live: I fear not death, "CHRIST, my Hope, is risen ⁸."

Acts of fear.—"The wicked shall not rise ⁹ in the judgment day to enjoy glory, but to be eternally miserable. O word of woe! Thou shalt have no Resurrection to life ¹⁰."

Acts of joy.—Thou shalt make me to hear of joy and gladness, that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice ¹¹.

Meditation for Easter Tuesday.

UPON THE SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION OF OUR SOULS.

"Remember that JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead."
2 Tim. ii. 3.

FIRST POINT.

CONSIDER that the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST is the pattern of the spiritual resurrection of our souls, and constrains us to live a new life, a life holy and godly. JESUS CHRIST "was delivered up to death for our offences, and was raised again for our justification ¹." His Resurrection was a passing from death unto life: ours must be such from sin unto grace, from vice unto virtue, from self-love to Divine love, from the inclinations of the old man to those of the new man. For "we have been buried with

⁸ Surrexit Christus, spes mea.

⁹ Ps. i. 6. This is the original meaning of the Hebrew word. It is so rendered in the LXX and Vulg. [Ed.]

¹⁰ Tibi resurrectio ad vitam non erit.

¹¹ Psal. li. 8.

¹ Rom. iv. 15.

Him by Baptism into death, that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead by the glory of His Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life²,” acquiring for our soul, qualities conformable to those of the glorious Life of His Body.

“His Body is impassible.”—We must have such power over our passions, as to seem exempt from them, and to have wholly lost them. It is “Agile :” we must apply ourselves quickly without weariness or repugnance, to all that regards the service of God and the practice of good works. “It is Subtle :” we must courageously pass through all the difficulties which hinder our perfection, and adopt a way of life and conduct rather spiritual and angelic, than corporeal and human. “It is bright and of dazzling Beauty :” the inward light of the Holy Spirit must enlighten our understanding, filling it with the knowledge of things divine, and the outward light of our good example must enlighten our neighbours, and impress them with the love and esteem of virtue.

SECOND POINT.

It is not enough to enter upon a new life in order to imitate our LORD in His Resurrection. We must, on our part, strive to preserve it and make it immortal. I say, on our part, for it is eternal on God’s side, Who giveth it us for ever ; and if we will, we shall never lose it ; grace is for ever, but, alas ! we make it but for a time when we wound it by sin. O death, what tears and wailing shall suffice for thee³ ? The Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST which is

² Rom. vi. 4.

³ Vita gratiæ est immortalis, si quidem potest, juvante Domino, in sempiternum ; quia gratiam, quam semel donat, in sempiternum donat. Sempiterna est gratia ; heu ! nos facimus temporalem, cum peccato eam sauciamus, atque occidimus. O mortem omni dolore planctuque dignam !—(*Barrad.* tom. iv. l. 8. c. 5.)

our Example, was not a return to death, says St. Bernard, but a passage to the life immortal, JESUS "CHRIST being raised from the dead, death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God⁴." "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD⁵. Change not the Day of the Resurrection into a day of death: be not ye like the soldiers who were keeping the sepulchre, who fell down through fear, and "became as dead men." Lose not that life of the soul which hath been restored to you; fall not back into those vices which ye have washed away by the tears of penitence. "Oh! grief of griefs! The Resurrection of the SAVIOUR is become the season of sin, and the time to fall anew⁶:" as if He were risen again that crimes might revive, and not that innocence and righteousness might flourish again and bud. "Is it thus, oh miserable men, that ye honour CHRIST after having received Him? Ye prepared a place for Him when He was about to come unto you, confessing your sins with grief, chastising your bodies, and giving alms: and as soon as ye have received Him, ye deliver Him up to His enemies, ye oblige Him to leave you, by recalling your former evil habits." What then? Do ye owe Him less honour when He is present with you, than when He is about to come unto you? Doth the time of His Resurrection exact less reverence than that of His Passion? Doth

⁴ Rom. vi. 9.

⁵ Rom. vi. 11.

⁶ Proh dolor! peccandi tempus, terminus recidendi, facta est resurrectio Salvatoris.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 1. de Resurr.*)

⁷ Sic honoratis, miseri, Christum quem suscepistis! Venturo paratis hospitium, confitentes peccata cum gemitu, castigantes corpora vestra, eleemosynas impendentes, et ecce susceptum proditis inimicis, imò exire compellitis, priores nequitias admittendo.—(*S. Bern. ibid.*)

it give you more license to do ill, or impose less obligation to do well*? On the contrary, it obligeth us to be more on our guard, to watch more over the motions of our souls, and to practise good works with greater care and fervour. The graces we have received during Lent claim this gratitude: he who hath received more, hath more to account for. When two persons are reconciled, if the same coldness is observable as before, it may reasonably be said, that their reconciliation is but feigned; if we then be restored to the favour of God, let us show it by the effects of true love, by a horror of sin, and by the exercise of virtues. "The works that I do," said our LORD, "they bear witness of Me." Let us bear witness then, by our holy actions, that the Sacraments have wrought a good work in us; that we have not received the grace of God in vain, and let not our conduct dishonour the dignity of the children of God, to which we have been exalted. Shall it be said that Satan redoubles his efforts in order to rob us of those treasures with which Heaven has enriched us, and that we relax in the care of self-defence and in securing the possession of them. Let us shrink from so shameful a reproach; let us not grieve the Son of God, by seeing the Price of His Blood and the fruit of His Sufferings perish within us. Let us treasure carefully, and preserve the graces which have cost Him so dear, remembering that holy habits of virtues, which are only acquired by reiterated acts, are lost or weakened by any intermission.

THIRD POINT.

Consider that our perseverance in grace, and consequently our spiritual resurrection, must endure

* Quid enim minus Præsenti debetur, quam Venturo? quid minus reverentie Resurrectionis tempus exigit, quàm Passionis?

even unto death. "Be ye faithful unto death," saith our LORD, "and I will give unto you a crown of life." There is this difference between the glorious resurrection of bodies, and the spiritual resurrection of souls; that God defers that of bodies until the consummation of the world, but that of souls is now present and delayeth not: as soon as the sinner repents, he leaveth the state of sin and passeth on to the state of Grace. The resurrection of bodies will take place but once; as they will die but once, so will they rise again but once; but the resurrection of souls may be many times reiterated; for since, as it often ariseth, men being frail fall again into sin, which deprives them of the soul's life, therefore the goodness of God giveth them the means of often rising again by penitence. The resurrection of bodies will be brought to pass but at the world's Last Day, and will endure for all eternity: the resurrection of souls may be wrought daily, even unto death; but after death there is no longer any resource: it is upon that moment that the glorious life depends, not only of souls, but also of bodies; if the soul rise not again before death, the body will rise again verily, but it will not rise to a life of glory: its life will be a life of eternal woe. We must, then, labour seriously to preserve the spiritual life of our souls during the course of this mortal life, lest death surprise us in sin: let us leave the care of our bodies to His Divine Providence, not fearing either death or present suffering: time is appointed for the cultivation and sanctification of our souls, eternity for glorifying both souls and bodies together.

ASPIRATIONS AND PRACTICES.

1. *Mortify the body.*—"They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts⁹."

⁹ Gal. v. 24.

2. *Live the Life of the Spirit.*—"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit¹."

3. *Think often of eternity, and long after Heaven.*—"If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the Right Hand of God²."

4. *Look upon death as a passage to Immortality.*—"To me to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain³."

Meditation for Wednesday in Easter-week.

UPON THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION.

"Remember that our LORD JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead."—2 Tim. ii. 8.

FIRST POINT.

Consider that our LORD rose again the third day after His Death, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up⁴." This number is full of mystery, and that which happened to the SON of GOD in those three days, teaches us what we ought to do and what we may expect from His Goodness. The first day, he bears His Cross, He suffers upon It, He dies upon It. Herein behold what we must imitate through our whole life. Our LORD says to each one of us: "Take up thy cross and follow Me⁵." "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me⁶." Expect not here below temporal prosperity. "Promise not thyself what the

¹ Gal. v. 25.

³ Phil. i. 21.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 24.

² Col. iii. 1.

⁴ John ii. 19.

⁶ Matt. x. 38.

Gospel doth not promise thee," saith St. Augustine⁷. "In the world ye shall have tribulation¹." "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice²." This is your portion.

The second day, His Body rests in the grave, separated from the Soul, and the Soul too enjoys its own repose. Thus, after death, our bodies remain in the earth until the end of the world, and the souls of the just enjoy rest eternal in Paradise so soon as they leave the body³, as the Church says, that the elect "rest in peace."

The third day, the Soul of our LORD reunites Itself to His Body, and communicates to It a glorious and immortal Life. And this is what we hope for at the Day of the general Resurrection, when shall be accomplished the words of the Prophet Hosea: "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up⁴." He means that the Death of Christ is the meritorious cause of our resurrection to life eternal, and that His Resurrection is its effective and exemplary cause: effective, because His Humanity is the instrument of the Divinity, which works through the power It thence receives; exemplary, because His Resurrection is of all others the most perfect and the first of all; and for this reason It will be the pattern of that of all others⁵.

Learn then, that in order to rise again with our Lord, we must await the third day, the day of triumph, which must be preceded by those of conflict and of death. For these three days are of Divine institution. The day of labour is the first, the day of rest the second, the Day of Resurrection the last⁶. Take

⁷ Quod Evangelium non promittit, nolite vobis ipsis promittere. (*S. Aug. in Ps. xcvi.*)

¹ John xvi. 33.

² John xvi. 20.

³ Altered.—[Ed.]

⁴ Hosea vi. 2.

⁵ Phil. iii. 21.

⁶ Divinæ siquidem ordinationis est triduum, quod prædixi-

heed that thou add not a fourth of man's invention, in order to defer repentance and toil. "They who have been dead four days, stink, and rise not again," says Saint Bernard. Beware of reversing the order of God, and of desiring to enjoy before thou hast suffered. If thou die not with CHRIST, thou wilt not rise with Him: if thou cast not away "the old man," thou wilt not "bear the image of the Heavenly." "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the LORD from Heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." "As" then "we have borne the image of the earthy," let us "also bear the image of the Heavenly"⁷; that glorious Image to Which the eternal Father hath from all eternity predestinated all His adopted children; that precious Image Which desireth that we should willingly embrace every sort of toil and suffering in order to acquire It; that Image Which is now "hid in God with JESUS CHRIST:" but "when CHRIST, Who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory"⁸. All creatures groan with this earnest expectation, hoping to partake in the "liberty" and glory "of the children of God"⁹. Do ye then also groan with them, waiting for the effect of the divine adoption, "to wit, the redemption and release of your bodies; crucify the members of the earthly man which are in thee:" "put ye off the old man and his works, and put ye on the new man"¹. For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "Be ye then steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the

mus, in labore, in requie, in resurrectione. (*S. Bern. serm. 2. de Resurr.*)

⁷ 1 Cor. xv. 47—49.

⁸ Col. iii. 3, 4.

⁹ Rom. viii. 21, 22.

¹ Eph. iv. 22, 24.

LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the LORD²."

SECOND POINT.

Consider that our LORD was raised from the dead, upon the same day which the world was created. The first day which saw the birth of the world, saw the Rising of the SAVIOUR of the world³. "This day is venerable," (says St. Augustine⁴), "it is the day of the Lord; the perfect day, the light-giving day, on which the first light appeared, the Israelites passed the Red Sea dry-shod, Manna fell from Heaven, our LORD honoured the baptism of St. John, changed water into wine, multiplied the loaves in the wilderness, and sent down the Holy Ghost." And St. Ignatius the martyr, before St. Augustine, said⁵: "Live we in conformity to the LORD's Day, on which our life first dawned through Him and His Death."

It was on this day that God said, in the beginning of the world, "Let there be light, and there was light." And it is on this day that He shed upon His Body a light of glory which made It brighter than the sun: upon His disciples, a light of faith and love, which enraptured them at the sight of their risen LORD: upon the new-born Church the

² 1 Cor. xv. 58.

³ Primo dierum omnium, quo mundus exstat conditus, vel quo resurgens conditor, nos morte victa liberat. (*Hym. 1. S. Greg. Magni.*)

Primusque videre promeruit nasci mundum, atque resurgere Christum. (*Sedulius, lib. iv.*)

⁴ S. Aug. [serm. 154. de temp.] et serm. 51.

⁵ Ep. ad Magnes. e. g. The interpolated Epistle (quoted by Nouet) expands this, "Let every one who loves CHRIST, keep as a festival the LORD's Day, the Day of the Resurrection, the Royal, the Chief of all days, in which both our life dawned, and the victory over death took place in CHRIST."

light of the Gospel, which spread itself ere long throughout the whole world, according to the prophecy of Zephaniah: "Wait ye upon Me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, that they may all call upon the Name of the LORD to serve Him with one consent⁶." Finally, it was also upon this day that He made the light of Grace to dawn upon all penitent sinners, by giving to the Apostles power to remit sins, and restore sinners on repentance⁷, which He ordained for the sanctification of our souls, according to the saying of St. Paul, that "CHRIST died for our sins, and rose again for our justification," that is to say, in order to effect by His Resurrection what He had merited by His Death; for, had He not risen, men had not believed in Him, and consequently had not been justified.

Here reflect upon thine own inward state, and see whether the Son of God hath made a new light arise in thy heart; whether He is risen again therein; has infused into it light, and love, and joy, and a spirit of penitence. Canst thou say with St. Gregory Nazianzen: "Yesterday I was raised upon the Cross with CHRIST, to-day I am raised with Him in glory. Yesterday I was buried with Him, to-day I rise again⁸." Remember that He leaveth in darkness none but hardened hearts, because they are enemies of the light. If thou share not in the fruit of His Resurrection, the fault is thine own; thou puttest some hindrances in its way, thou closest thy heart against His inspirations, or thou feignest

⁶ Zeph. iii. 8, 9.

⁷ Altered.

⁸ *Heri cum Christo in crucem agebar, hodie simul glorificor; heri commoriebar, hodie vivificor; heri consepeliebar, hodie resurgo.*

not to see them, for fear of being obliged to follow them.

THIRD POINT.

Consider that CHRIST arose at the break of day, when the sun seems to make all the beauties of nature revive, and in spring-time, when the fruits and flowers of the earth spring up afresh. "My flesh hath revived⁹." Nothing blossoms anew which hath not blossomed before. The Flesh of the LORD was as an opening flower when It came forth from the Virgin's womb; It unfolded Itself anew when It burst from the sepulchre, and like a flower exhaled upon mankind the sweet odour of immortality¹. This it is which made one of old say², that there is a great resemblance between the virginal womb of Mary, and the sepulchre of the LORD, and that the latter had even the advantage, by having given Him a more glorious Birth, because Mary bare Him Mortal, whilst the grave gave Him back Immortal. Observe that our Lord died at three in the afternoon, when the day was closing, and rose again about three in the morning, when the sun was rising. St. Chrysologus says that the sun had fled before night-fall, when the SAVIOUR of the world was nailed to the Cross; but that, when He rose again, it indemnified itself by forestalling the night, and in its turn chased it away, earlier than its wont, in order to restore to the Day of the Resurrection those

⁹ Ps. xxvii. 7. Vulg. "My heart greatly rejoiced." E. V.

¹ Non reforescit, nisi quod ante floruit; floruit enim caro Domini, cum primum de Virginis utero processit; reforuit autem, cum rediviva de sepulcro germinavit, et in floribus modum cunctis hominibus immortalitatis afflavit odorem. (*S. Maximus, serm. 5 de Resurrect.*)

² Sermon 56, formerly ascribed to S. Ambrose, probably S. Maximus.

three hours of which the darkness had robbed the day of the Passion³.

However that may be, this pious thought warns thee to redouble thy fervor during this holy season, in order to repair the many hours and precious moments which thou shouldest have spent in the service of God, and which by thy negligence thou hast lost. See how the Son of God, Who is the Sun of Righteousness, shortens the time for His Resurrection, that He may cheer thee and hasten thy deliverance. Harken to His loving call: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth⁴." Rise up quickly, for the Sun of Righteousness would shed His Light upon thy darkness; He would disperse thine enemies, warm thy coldness, and make all graces blossom anew in thy soul.

ASPIRATIONS AND PRACTICES.

1. *An act of joy.*—"This is the Day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it⁵."

2. *An act of hope.*—"We trusted that it had been He Which should have redeemed Israel⁶." "O Disciples," saith St. Augustine, "ye trusted; do ye then trust no more? What! CHRIST liveth, and faith is dead in you⁷!"

3. *An act of faith.*—"I believe and confess that in this flesh we shall all rise again," said Eutychius,

³ Qui ante noctem fugerat, nunc ipse noctem prævenit fugaturus, ut reddat luci nox horas, quas terror Dominicæ Passionis invaserat. (*S. Chrysost. serm. 2. de Resurrect.*)

⁴ Cant. ii. 10—12.

⁵ Ps. cxviii. 24.

⁶ Luke xxiv. 21.

⁷ O discipuli, sperabatis. Ergo jam non speratis? Ecce Christus vivit, et spes mortua est in vobis. (*S. Aug. serm. 235.*)

patriarch of Constantinople, as he held the skin of his body when dying⁸.

4. *An act of patience.* "Behold," said Minutius Felix, "how all nature presents thee with an image of the Resurrection for thy comfort. The sun sets, and then rises; the stars hide themselves, and then appear again; the flowers die and then bloom afresh; seeds do not spring up till after they have decayed in the bosom of the earth; trees do not renew their foliage till after winter has despoiled them of their leaves. So is it with our bodies; they will not rise again till after death. Why wilt thou that they should live again in the depth of winter? Thou must await the spring⁹."

Meditation for Thursday in Easter-week.

THE EUCHARIST IS A PLEDGE OF THE RESURRECTION.

"Remember that JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead."—
2 Tim. ii. 7.

FIRST POINT.

Consider, that JESUS CHRIST by rising again from the dead, restores to us the gift of the Divine Eucharist, which He had bestowed upon us before His Death. His Resurrection is like a restoration of that adorable Mystery in all Its perfection, and in all Its fulness¹. In giving us His Body now that He

⁸ Confiteor quia omnes in hac carne resurgemus. (Vide *S. Greg. lib. xiv. Mor. c. 56. § 72, sqq. t. ii. p. 166—168. O. T.*)

⁹ Quid festinas ut cruda adhuc hyeme reviviscat et vireat? Expectandum etiam corporis ver est.

¹ Omission.

is risen again, He giveth It us anew, Impassible, and Immortal. It is not enough for His love to have given His mortal Life for our salvation, He willetth also, through excess of goodness, to employ therein His glorious Life, and join eternity with time, in order to effect our sanctification.

Oh, exceeding love! We, as ungrateful and rebellious children, deserved to be for ever deprived of that Heavenly Bread, and yet He freely gives It us on the very Day of His Resurrection, and He giveth It us for ever, so that death can never henceforth snatch It from us. For "CHRIST being raised from the Dead dieth no more." O SAVIOUR, worthy of all love, why am I not as constant in loving Thee, as Thou art in loading me with Thy favours! Oh, blessed Day! Day of the Resurrection of the Eucharist, if I may so speak, "Day of Bread and Light," which restores to us That Divine Lamb, Which Love sacrificed upon the Cross, and Which it still offers upon the Altar! Verily, each day of Communion should be to us an Easter-Day; we ought to receive the Heavenly Bread with joy like unto that which the disciples felt at the sight of the Risen CHRIST; since it is He Himself Whom we receive in the Sacrament, such as He came forth from the Tomb, full of glory and of light. O Father of the world to come, vouchsafe unto Thy children a new life, that they may no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him Who died and rose again for all.

SECOND POINT.

Consider that JESUS CHRIST, by restoring us the Eucharist, makes us participate in the Resurrection, in three ways: first, by impressing upon our souls qualities resembling the four properties of His glorious Body; raising *prudence*, which regulates the thoughts of our minds, to such a high degree of clearness and light, that it is able not only to guide

our life, but also to enlighten others by our good example; giving to *justice*, which governs the will, a wonderful vigour and facility in the practice of all sorts of good works, in proportion to the activity of the body; perfecting the virtue of *fortitude*, which regulates the irascible appetite, so that it goes through every obstacle, and surmounts every difficulty which presents itself, even as glorified bodies penetrate all things, and pass wherever they will, without opposition or hindrance from any other body; finally, giving to *temperance*, which governs the fleshly appetite, a certain spiritual impassibility, which renders us, as it were, insensible, or rather inaccessible, to sensual pleasures and disorderly passions, and leaves us at liberty to follow the light of reason and of grace.

Secondly, by communicating to our bodies a special right to the Resurrection, founded upon His express promise, and upon our union with Him through the partaking of the Divine Mysteries. For our body by virtue of this Sacrament, becomes the Body of CHRIST; and, as He maketh it His by a special right, and as "no man hateth his own flesh," as saith Saint Paul, He must needs bear it good will. Now, what greater good can He procure for it than that of a blessed and immortal life? Moreover, He hath promised us this Himself, assuring us, that "Whoso eateth His Flesh, and drinketh His Blood, hath eternal life; and He will raise him up at the last day." Whereupon St. Cyril says², "that it will be the Body of JESUS CHRIST Which will raise up ours." "I will raise him up, He saith; not as being other from His Own Flesh (though by nature other), seeing after the union with It He cannot be divided into two Sons. I then, He saith, being in

² L. iv. in S. Joh. vi. 55.

him, will through My Flesh raise at the last Day him who eateth It. For it cannot but be that He Who is, by nature, Life, should wholly prevail over corruption, and conquer death. Wherefore although that death, which through the transgression mastered us, still hath power over the human body, and it must needs decay, yet since CHRIST is in us through His own Flesh, we shall assuredly rise; for it is incredible, yea, impossible, that Life should not give life to those in whom It is." Whence St. Ignatius calls the Eucharist "the medicine of Immortality³;" the Church says, It is "the pledge⁴ of eternal Life." Hence also, some Divines believe that the bodies of those who have eaten this Heavenly Bread with a peculiar reverence, will have an especial lustre of beauty, which may be called a Eucharistic glory; this ought to encourage us to receive this precious Pledge of our Resurrection with all possible piety and fervour.

In the third place, the SAVIOUR of the world makes us partakers of His Resurrection, by impressing sometimes, through an extraordinary favour, as when after the Communion they recover their health suddenly⁵, or continue for a length of time without taking any other nourishment than the Holy Sacrament,—of which last we have many examples in the lives of the Fathers of the desert, and of many other saints⁶. These privileges are, indeed, rather objects

³ Ep. ad Eph. fin.

⁴ *Pignus vitæ æternæ*. A statement attributed to S. Chrysostome without any reference, has been omitted, as unlikely to be his; and a story as to S. Basil, founded on the life formerly attributed to S. Amphilochius, now abandoned by all of any weight. See Tillemont's note 82 sur S. Basile, who quotes Baronius.

⁵ Instantaneous restoration of mental health through the Holy Communion has been bestowed recently in the English Church.—Ed.

⁶ *Pallad. in lausiaca* [c. 8] et 46. *Vita S. Cath. Senens. et*

of admiration than to be sought for ; but they ought to fill us with a high estimation of the goodness of the SON of GOD, and with extreme confusion at our want of love and gratitude for His gifts ! Oh ! SAVIOUR, worthy of all love, how ashamed I am to draw nigh to Thy Holy Table with so little faith, reverence, and love ! Ah ! LORD, cast upon me but one of Those rays of glory, which issue from Thy Glorified Body, that it may dispel the darkness from my heart, and give me a mind befitting this adorable Mystery, that so I may reap the fruit of Thy Mercies towards me.

THIRD POINT.

Consider that in receiving the inestimable Gift of the Eucharist, and celebrating the Divine Mysteries, we publicly profess to believe in and honour the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST, and we renew the memorial Thereof.

“Wherein, my brethren,” saith St. Augustine, “but in the ‘breaking of Bread’ did the SAVIOUR will that He should be known when risen ?” Let us then hold for certain that we enjoy the same benefit : we break the Bread at the Altar, and therein we recognize our LORD. He willed to be known there only out of love for us, who were not to see Him in the Flesh, and were nevertheless to eat His Flesh. Whoso then is faithful, whoso beareth not in vain the name of Christian, whoso entereth the Church by a lawful right, let the “breaking of Bread”

S. Cath. Genuensis, etc. [Of S. Cath. of Genoa, this is related only of her last long illness ; of S. Catherine of Sienna, Butler says, “For many years she had accustomed herself to so rigorous an abstinence, that the Blessed Eucharist *might be said to be almost the only* nourishment which supported her. Once she fasted from Ash-Wednesday till Ascension-day, receiving only the Blessed Eucharist during the whole time.” —ED.]

console him. The absence of **JESUS CHRIST** hindereth not His Presence; have faith, doubt not, He is with thee, though thou see Him not.

ASPIRATIONS AND PRACTICES.

1. *Act of joy*.—"Let the righteous be glad, and rejoice before God; let them also be merry and joyful⁷."

2. *Act of faith and union*.—"God is in His holy Habitation, He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house⁸."

3. *Preparation for Communion*.—"Make a highway for Him Who ariseth from the dead, That rideth upon the heavens, Who triumpheth over death; praise Him in His Name **JAH**⁹."

4. *Act of Confidence*.—"God is our God, even the God of Whom cometh salvation; God is the **LORD** by Whom we escape death¹."

5. Honour the Day of the Resurrection; admire the Power and Glory of the **SAVIOUR**. Make it a solemn day. "God is the **LORD** Which hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee; Thou art my God, and I will exalt Thee²."

"The same Stone Which the builders refused, is become the Head-Stone of the corner. This is the **LORD**'s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the Day which the **LORD** hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it, and confess that God is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever³." O that our life and our eternity may have no other employment than to sing the Mercies of God, Who giveth us His Only Son in the Eucharist, and maketh us to share in His Resurrection.

⁷ Ps. lxxviii. 3.

⁸ From v. 5.

² Ps. cxviii. 27.

⁸ Ib. v. 6.

¹ Ib. 20.

³ Ibid.

Meditation for Friday in Easter-week.

UPON THE DELAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

“Remember that JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead.”—
2 Tim. ii. 8.

FIRST POINT.

CONSIDER that there is this difference between the spiritual Resurrection of the soul, and the general Resurrection of the body; that of the soul is to take place during this present life, but that of the body is deferred until the consummation of the world, for three important reasons.

First, to give us a horror of sin and of the death of the soul, which to the eye is invisible, by the image of the death of the body, which seems fearful to all the senses, and yet it is but a shadow of the other. If we had sufficient light from heaven to see the hideousness and deformity of sin in all its nakedness, we could not bear the sight of it and live. “One single sin,” says St. Chrysostome, “hath made the devils so horrible, that did God permit them to unveil their faces to us, the terror they would cause would suffice to take away our senses, and even our life⁴.” St. Frances of Rome says⁵, “That she would willingly have thrown herself into a burning furnace for fear of again seeing the devils in the horrible

⁴ Continuo mente dimoveremur, et solutis artuum compagibus evolare animus à corpore. (*S. Chrys. in Ps. xli.*)
[Wrong ref.]

⁵ *In vita Sanctæ Franciscæ*, l. v. c. 11.

forms in which they had just presented themselves before her eyes." St. Catherine of Sienna assures us⁶, "That she would rather have walked through flames to the world's end, than see the evil spirit but for a little time, such as she had seen him for the space of a moment;" and she adds, that "if men felt what it is to see the devils, they would choose rather to endure all the miseries of this life, than the mere sight of so fearful an object." St. Catherine of Genoa had the same feeling⁷, and said, "That the sight of the devil caused her such extreme torment for the opposition she made to his malice, that to avoid it she would willingly have cast herself into hell." As for us, who have not so penetrating a sight, we ought to make use of the thoughts of death, and of the innumerable evils which happen in this life, in order to excite within us the fear and horror of sin against God, which is the true cause of these dreadful effects. This is the first fruit to be gathered from the delay of the Resurrection.

SECOND POINT.

Consider that the second cause of this delay, is to give us an opportunity of practising the most excellent virtues. For it is in the sufferings, and especially in the danger of death, that we exercise humility most perfectly and most nobly, seeing ourselves so near the dust of the grave, wherein all the glory of this world is buried for ever; then we exercise patience, by willingly enduring the pains and weariness which sickness ordinarily causes, and by resigning ourselves to the Will of God; obedience, by heartily accepting the state of dependence in which the sick are placed, on physicians and those who wait on them; confidence in God, by commit-

⁶ *S. Cathar. Sen. dialog. b. 88 et 132.*

⁷ *S. Cathar. Gen. 50. capita vitæ ejus.*

ting ourselves to His Mercy, and casting ourselves into His Arms, when that eternity is in sight, upon which we are all to enter, without knowing whether to us it will be full of blessing or of woe: we exercise piety, gratitude, and devotion, by offering ourselves to death and anguish, that we may imitate **JESUS CHRIST**, and acknowledge the Love He bore us in dying for us upon the Cross; purity of intention, in the service of God, and in the use of the Sacraments. For if, for example, the Eucharist conferred upon us, so soon as we received It, the gift of immortality and of impassibility, we should approach the Holy Table, to be freed rather from the miseries of the body, than from those of the soul, to enjoy the blessing and sweetness of this life, rather than the eternal rewards in heaven; in short, for our own interest rather than for the glory of God, which ought to be the ultimate, or, to speak more truly, the sole end of all our good works.

Admire herein the wisdom and goodness of **JESUS**, Who hath converted the penalty of sin, that is to say, death^a, into an excellent means of practising every virtue, and of delivering us from every vice. For, whereas it was said to the first man and to all his seed: "If thou sinnest, thou shalt die," now it is said to the martyrs, "Die, that thou mayest sin no more^b."

Thus, my **SAVIOUR**, death, through Thine Infinite Goodness, is no longer a punishment to Thy servants, but a remedy. It is no longer an object of fear, but of love; Thou dost no longer threaten to take from us this present life, but Thou givest us a contempt for it, by leaving us the pledge of the life to come, in the participation of Thy precious Body, Which is the provision for our pilgrimage, and maketh us pass onward to immortality through death itself.

^a Rom. vi. 23.

^b *St. Aug.*

Henceforth, then, I will no longer fear either sickness, pain, or death. I will comfort myself with the hope of the glorious resurrection of my body, which will set me wholly free from every ill: I ask of Thee nothing for this present time, but that Thy Precious Flesh Which I partake of at the Altar, may begin within my soul an all-holy Resurrection, which may make me invulnerable and impassible to all the darts of sin; active and quick in the practice of virtues; vigorous in surmounting every obstacle which may hinder me from recognizing and fulfilling all Thy sacred Will; full of light, by the example of my demeanour and the whole conduct of my life, undying in Thy love, which may unite me to Thee by bands so sweet and strong, that neither life nor death can ever dissolve them.

THIRD POINT.

Consider that the last cause of the delay of the glorious Resurrection of bodies, is the honour paid to God by the sacrifice we make to Him of our life, and the opportunity we thereby have of arriving at the height of perfection, by exercising the two most noble acts of divine love, namely, to suffer and die for the service of God, or for the salvation of our neighbour. For this is the highest point of perfection to which zeal for the glory of God, and zeal for souls can attain, according to the very words of JESUS CHRIST, Who says, that there is no greater proof of love, "than that a man lay down his life for his friends." Hence, St. Augustine says, "the Martyrs hold the first rank in the Church of God, and the highest degree of honour¹." Hence he calls them the "princes of the Churches, worthy of being

¹ Martyres namque in Ecclesiis locum summum tenent, atque apicē sanctæ dignitatis excellunt. (*S. Aug. in Ps. lxxvii. 28.*)

chiefs, worthy of imitation, worthy of all honour¹." And elsewhere: "Wherefore are the martyrs so great, so lofty, crowned more gloriously than other men? why, as the faithful know, are the Martyrs' names rehearsed, in a place of their own, apart from the other dead; nor are they prayed for, but the Church is recommended through their prayers? Whence is it, but because the death which they chose to endure for the confession of the Lord, and which they chose rather than deny CHRIST, is assuredly bitter and fearful to nature²?" "Therefore,"

¹ *Principes Ecclesiarum, dignos ducatu, dignos imitatione, dignos honoribus.*

² *Unde Martyres magni, unde excelsi, unde cæteris hominibus florentius coronati! Unde, quod norunt fideles, distincti à defunctis loco suo Martyres recitantur, nec pro eis oratur, sed eorum orationibus Ecclesia commendatur! Unde hoc, nisi quia mors, quem pro dominica confessione elegerunt suscipere, potius quam Christum negare, utique amara est!* (*S. Aug. serm. 297, § 2.*)

"Orationibus" has been translated, without any doubt, in the abl. "through," not the dat. "to." The two passages of S. Aug. throw light on each other. He is, in both, referring to the Eucharistic prayer, in which the martyrs and others who have departed in the true faith of CHRIST, are mentioned separately. Of the first, it adds, "to whose good deeds and prayers vouchsafe, that we may in all things be defended by the help of Thy protection." Of the others, "To these, O LORD, and all who are at rest in CHRIST, we beseech Thee to bestow a place of refreshment, light, and peace." (*S. Greg. Sacram. et Canon Missæ.*) This is precisely S. Augustine's distinction, and in no Liturgy until now are there any invocations in this place. In the corresponding place of S. Basil's Liturgy there is, "through whose prayers and intercessions have mercy upon us also, and save us through Thy Holy Name which is called upon us" (*Ass. Cod. lib. vii. p. 64*); and similarly in that of S. James, (*ib. v. pp. 68, 88, &c.*) and in S. Cyril of Jerusalem, "that at their prayers and intervention God would receive our petition." (*Lect. 23, § 9, p. 275, Oxf. Tr.*) In the Liturgy of S. Peter or S. Mark (*ib. p. 24*) there is no such distinction, but the prayers are offered for all. In our first English Liturgy, the distinction was

he says in another place, "at the Holy Table we make not commemoration of them, in such wise as of others who rest in peace, as also to pray for them, but rather in order that they may pray for us, that we may tread close in their steps, for they have fulfilled that charity than which the LORD hath said there can be none greater³."

ASPIRATIONS AND PRACTICES.

1. An act of thanksgiving to our LORD for having left us the means of gaining three glorious crowns, by surmounting, through sufferings, labours, and death, the three greatest enemies of His glory and of man's salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

2. *An act of hope.*—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life⁴." "The crown of life is promised," (says the Abbot Joachim upon these words,) "because they who give their life to God, do with the triumph of a previous death, attain to the true life, that since they lost it in this exile, they might preserve it in the kingdom of Heaven⁵."

retained, although mention of these prayers was omitted. (Book of Common Prayer, 1549.) The word "*commendamus*" exactly corresponds to the Greek form familiar to us in Bp. Andrewes' translation, 5th day, "Making mention of the all-holy, undefiled, more than blessed Mary, Mother of God, and ever-virgin, with all saints, let us *commend* ourselves and each other and all our life to CHRIST our God." (Tract 88, p. 60.)

³ Ideo ad ipsam mensam non sic eos commemoramus, quemadmodum alios, qui in pace requiescunt, ut etiam pro eis oremus, sed magis ut orent ipsi pro nobis, ut eorum vestigiis inhaeramus, quia impleverunt ipsi charitatem, qua Dominus dixit non posse esse majorem. (S. Aug. tract. 84 in Joan.)

⁴ Rev. ii.

⁵ Corona vitæ promittitur, quia ii qui donant vitam Deo, cum triumpho pretiosæ mortis, perveniunt ad veram vitam,

3. The love of mortification, and esteem for sufferings. "Precious in the Sight of the LORD is the death of His saints⁶." "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal⁷."

Meditation⁸ for the Saturday after Easter.

ON THE OFFICE OF OUR RISEN LORD AS MEDIATOR OF PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

"There is One GOD and One MEDIATOR between GOD and man, the Man CHRIST JESUS."—1 Tim. ii.

FIRST POINT.

JESUS CHRIST is our Mediator in many different ways, according to the teaching of the holy fathers.

Among other parts of this great office, St. Cyril says⁹, that He is our Mediator as being wont to stand in the midst between those who worship Him and their persecutors, not allowing the enemy to come near us, but keeping off his attacks; as a type whereof, the Angel of God, and the column of a cloud, "removed and came between the camp of the Egyp-

quoniam, ut eam servare possent in regno, eam in exilio perdidierunt.

⁶ Ps. cxvi. 15.

⁷ John xii. 25.

⁸ Holy Scripture passing over in entire silence our Blessed Lord's appearance to His Mother, and, on the other hand, directly asserting that He appeared first to S. Mary Magdalene, the Meditation on that Appearance has been omitted here, and the following thoughts substituted, which form part of the "Entretien pour l'Octave de Pâques," from the "Lectures Spirituelles" of the same author.—ED.

⁹ De Adorat. lib. iii. p. 86.

tians and the camp of Israel, so that the one came not near the other all the night."

The same Father says, He is our Mediator, as "uniting" together things below with things above; for He is our Peace, Who made both one, and joined together men with the company of the angels by the bond of charity."

Lactantius¹ says, that He "became Mediator between God and man, in order to lead men to God and immortality; for had He been only God, He could not give men examples of human virtues; if only Man, He could not, without some power and authority greater than man's, constrain men to righteousness."

Anastasius Sinaita says, that "JESUS CHRIST came into the world in the office of a Mediator, in the year four thousand, which is the middle of ages, even as the Sun appeared in the Heaven on the fourth day of the world's creation, which day stood in the middle, between the three preceding and the three following days; wherefore," says he, "this Star was herein the figure of the True Sun of Righteousness," "the Mediator between God and man," Who stands between things visible and invisible, as their Sovereign LORD, Who is also between the Father and the Holy Ghost, in the Order of the Three Divine Persons, and the Corner-Stone between the Jew and the Gentile; and Who, moreover, was lifted up on the Cross between two thieves and wrought the salvation of the world in the middle of the earth and in the middle of the day."

But, properly speaking, the true office of our Divine Mediator, is to mediate our peace and reconciliation with God, and to obtain for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, who of enemies makes us children. "Long

¹ Ib. lib. xi. p. 384.

² Inst. iv. 25.

must be the discourse," says St. Augustine, "to speak of that Mediator as much as the subject deserves, yea, worthily to speak of Him is impossible to mortal man³."

It will suffice then to see the need we had of so excellent a Mediator, in order to obtain peace for us, and reconcile us to God. For the most miserable effect of sin, is the enmity and hostility it causes between God and the sinner, saith the Lord, in a tone of reproof full of wrath and indignation: "your iniquities have separated between you and your God⁴." What indeed can sin bring forth, but enemies of God, fugitives and miserable rebels? "What mean these words: Do what God forbids?" "What," said an ancient author, speaking to the Emperor Constantius in defence of St. Athanasius, "what but: Be the enemies of God, make yourselves the friends of the devil, lose paradise, love hell, love the burning lake, desire to be with all those who are for ever under the wrath of God; desire to be men of the devil⁵?" "Lord, they who remove far from Thee shall perish⁶."

But how can the sinner "remove far from God?" "In purpose and soul," says St. Chrysostome⁷, "for

³ Quod ergo per Mediatorem reconciliamur Deo, et accipimus Spiritum Sanctum, ut ex inimicis efficiamur filii, hæc est gratia Dei per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum: de quo Mediatore longum est, ut quanta dignum est, tanta dicantur, quamvis ab homine digna dici non possint. (*S. Aug. Enchir. c. 33.*)

⁴ Is. lix. 2.

⁵ Quid est aliud dicere: Facite quod Deus fieri prohibuit, nisi: Estote inimici Dei, acquirite vobis diabolum amicum, date operam ne consequamini paradysum, amate inferna, diligite stagnum ardens, desiderate esse cum omnibus qui semper poenas dant, desiderate esse homines diaboli. *Lucifer Calar. lib. i. pro S. Athan. alloquens Const. Imp.*

⁶ Ps. lxxiii. 27.

⁷ S. Chrysost. hom. xi. in ep. ad Phil. p. 135, Oxf. Tr.

it cannot be in place. For how could he fly from Him Who is every where present? And yet the sinner does fly. For the Scripture saith, 'The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth him.' We eagerly fly from God, although He alway pursueth us. The Apostle hasted, that he might be near Him. We haste, that we may be far off. Are not these things worthy of lamentation? Are not these things worthy of tears? Whither fleest thou? Wretched and miserable man, whither fleest thou from thy Life and thy Salvation? If thou fly from God, with whom wilt thou take refuge? If thou fly from the Light, whither wilt thou cast thine eyes? If thou fly from thy Life, whence wilt thou henceforth live? Let us fly from the enemy of our Salvation!"

And to end this fatal divorce which separates us from God, let us acknowledge our obligation to have recourse to His Well-Beloved Son, that we may make our peace through His Mediation, and be restored to His Favour; "for," says Radulph, "this humility well becometh the sinner, that he presume not to seek pardon but through a Mediator⁸." Now, no one, unless he be at once both God and man, can perfectly fill the office of a Mediator, and accomplish that great and deep Mystery, ordained before all ages for the reconciliation of mankind. "Herein," says S. Fulgentius, "is the Man CHRIST JESUS the True Mediator of men, in that of the Father He had, by Nature, the Form of God, whereby He could save, and took of the Virgin the Form of a Servant, which in us He might save. Man could never receive from God the grace of salvation, if the Divine and Human Nature were not united in One Person⁹."

⁸ Decet enim peccatorem hæc humilitas, ut sine Mediatore petere indulgentiam non præsumat.

⁹ In eo verus Mediator est hominum homo Christus Jesus,

St. Augustine, when applying to JESUS CHRIST in His Office of Mediator, these words of Scripture, "I the LORD will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them¹," asks, why it is said that "David shall be a prince among the people of God?" and taking David, in a figurative sense, for the SAVIOUR of the world, he gives this reason: "Because² the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us, therefore He is the Mediator between God and man, being GOD with the FATHER, and Man with men; as Man, Mediator but through His Divinity; as God, Mediator but through His Humanity; behold the Mediator. Divinity without humanity is not Mediatorial, neither humanity without Divinity. But the Mediator between Divinity Alone and humanity alone, is the Human Divinity, and the Divine Humanity of Christ." I know not if the schools would make use of these terms, but the meaning of that learned Father is, that the Divinity and Humanity of JESUS CHRIST united together have contributed to the reconciliation of men and to the peace of the whole universe, though in a different way: His Holy Humanity, by the Actions and Sufferings necessary to appease the wrath of God; His Divinity, by sanctifying them, and making them

in quo et de Patre formam Dei, per quam salvaret, naturaliter habuit, et ex Virgine formam servi, quam in nobis salvaret, accepit. Nunquam a Deo homo gratiam salutis acciperet, si in una persona divinæ humanæque naturæ communio non maneret. (*S. Fulg. ad Donatum*, c. 16.)

¹ Ezek. xxxiv. 24.

² Quia Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis, inde est Mediator Dei et hominum, quia Deus cum Patre, quia homo cum hominibus: non Mediator homo præter deitatem; non Mediator Deus præter humanitatem; ecce Mediator. Divinitas sine humanitate non est mediatrix: humanitas sine divinitate non est mediatrix. Sed inter divinitatem solam et humanitatem solam mediatrix est humana divinitas, et divina humanitas Christi. (*S. Aug. serm. 47*, c. 12.)

worthy to repair the insult offered to the Creator, to satisfy His Justice, and to obtain the pardon of our offences.

SECOND POINT.

Hence, He is not a Mediator in that He is God, but in that He is Man. "For," as St. Augustine says³, "as Man He was a Mediator; but as the Word, not in the middle between God and man, but equal with God, and God with God, and together One God." "A Mediator between God and man," says that holy father, "must needs have something like unto God, something like unto men; lest if He were in both like unto man, he should be far from God, or, if in both like God, far from men, and so not a Mediator. That deceitful mediator then, by whom, in Thy secret judgments, pride deserved to be deluded, hath one thing in common with man, that is, sin; another he would seem to have in common with God, and not being clothed with mortal flesh, would vaunt himself to be immortal. But," says St. Augustine, "since 'the wages of sin is death,' this hath he in common with men, whereby, with them, he should be condemned to death eternal⁴." Wherefore he can obtain for us, by his mediation, nought but death. And, in truth, he has opened the way to it through the sin of Adam; for "by one man sin entered into the world." "The devil was the mediator of this road;" he who persuaded to sin cast us headlong into death; and used his one only death,

³ In quantum enim homo, in tantum Mediator; in quantum autem Verbum, non medius, quia æqualis Deo, et Deus apud Deum, et simul unus Deus. (*S. Aug. Confess. x. 43.*)

⁴ Unum cum hominibus habet, aliud videri vult habere cum Deo, ut quia carnis mortalitate non tegitur, pro immortalis se ostendet: sed quia stipendium peccati mors est, hoc habet commune cum hominibus, unde simul damnetur in mortem. (*Ib. c. 42.*)

to work our two-fold death, viz. death temporal and death eternal⁵.

"But⁶ the True Mediator, Whom in Thy secret mercy, O God, Thou hast showed to the humble, and sentest that by His example they too might learn that same humility, that Mediator between God and man, the Man CHRIST JESUS, appeared between mortal sinners and the Immortal. Just One and mortal sinners: Mortal with men, Just with God; that, because the wages of righteousness are life and peace, He might by a Righteousness conjoined with God, make void that death of sinners now made righteous, which He willed to have in common with them." To conclude in the words of the same father⁷, "He is therefore a Mediator, in that He is Man; inferior to the Father, in that He is nearer to us; superior to us, in that He is nearer to the Father. To speak more plainly, inferior to the Father, in that 'He took upon Him the Form of a Servant;' superior to us, in that He was without spot of sin."

THIRD POINT.

In this sense, "there is but One Mediator between God and man;" and, as St. Augustine says⁸, "if St. Paul were a mediator, all the Apostles would

⁵ Ib. c. 43.

⁶ Per unum quippe hominem peccatum intravit in mundum. Hujus viæ mediator diabolus fuit, persuasor peccati, et præcipitator in mortem. Nam et ipse ad operandum duplam mortem nostram, simplam attulit suam. (*S. Aug. de Trin.* iv. 12. add c. 13.)

⁷ Per hoc ergo mediator, per quod homo: inferior Patri, per quod nobis propinquior; superior nobis, per quod Patri propinquior. Quod apertius ita dicitur: inferior Patre, quia in forma servi; superior nobis, quia sine labe peccati. (*S. Aug. de pecc. orig.* c. 28)

⁸ Si esset mediator Paulus, essent utique et cæteri co-apostoli ejus, ac sic essent multi mediatores. (*S. Aug. c. Parm.* ii. 8. § 16.)

be so too, and so would there be many mediators," and so he could not have rightly said, "There is One God, and One Mediator between God and man ⁹."

It has been well remarked ¹, that JESUS CHRIST is called the One Only Mediator, for three reasons: 1st, Because He alone can Mediate our reconciliation by way of redemption, that is to say, by paying a price equal to the offence committed against God ²." 2ndly, Because He Alone is Mediator, both by Office and by Nature; by Office, in that His Father sent Him to ransom and reconcile sinners; by Nature, in that He is at once both God and Man. "JESUS CHRIST," says St. Cyril, "is the Mediator between God and man, not only because He hath reconciled man to God, but also because by Nature and Substance He is both God and Man in One and the Same Person. For thus it is that God hath reconciled our nature to Himself. Otherwise, how could St. Paul say there is but 'One Mediator?' For many of the saints have exercised the ministry of mediation ³." 3rdly, Because He is the Sovereign Mediator on Whom all others depend, they having no power to help us, nor to help themselves, but through Him, whereas He needs no one, neither for Himself nor for us; He can ever treat with His Father immediately, through Himself, and save those who draw near unto God through Him, seeing that "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." "All Christians," says St. Augustine, "commend themselves to each other's prayers; but He for Whom none intercede, but Who intercedes for all, is the One Only and True Mediator ⁴."

⁹ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

¹ Bellarmine de beat. Sanct. i. 20. t. ii.

² "Who gave Himself a Ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6.

³ S. Cyril. Thesaur. xii. c. 10.

⁴ Omnes Christiani invicem se commendant orationibus

"Blessed be God," says St. Bernard, "Who, out of the great love wherewith He loved us, sent to us His Most Dearly Beloved Son, in Whom He was well pleased; through Whom, being reconciled, we may have peace with Him, whereof He is made unto us the Mediator and Pledge. We have nothing to fear, my brethren, under so loving a Mediator; nothing whereof to doubt of so faithful a Pledge⁵."

Act of Fear.—"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" "What can be done more for My Vineyard that I have not done to it?"

Act of Steadfastness.—"Seeing that we have a great High Priest That is passed into the heavens, JESUS, the SON of GOD, let us hold fast our profession."

Act of Trust.—"We have not an High Priest Which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Act of Hope.—"We have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even JESUS, made an High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec."

suis: pro Quo autem nullus interpellat, sed Ipse pro omnibus, Hic Unus verusque Mediator est. (*S. Aug. c. Parm. l. c.*)

⁵ Benedictus Deus, qui, propter nimiam charitatem suam qua dilexit nos, misit nobis Filium suum dilectum et qui ei bene complacuit, per quem reconciliati pacem habeamus ad Eum, et Idem fit in nobis reconciliationis hujus et Mediator et Obses. Non est quod vereamur, fratres mei, sub tam pio Mediatore; non est quod de tam fido Obside dubitemus. (*De Nativ. Dom. serm. 5, init.*)

Meditation for the First Sunday after Easter.

THE HOLY WOMEN, COMMONLY CALLED THE
THREE MARYS, GO TO THE GRAVE OF CHRIST,
AND TEACH US HOW WE MUST LOVE HIM.

“And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint JESUS. And very early the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.”—Mark xvi. 1, 2.

REMARK.

The Evangelists all speak of these holy women ; but St. John mentions Mary Magdalene only. St. Matthew names two, viz. “Mary Magdalene and another Mary.” St. Mark, three. St. Luke says that there were three, “Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and some others with them.”

Some may ask, when they bought their sweet spices. St. Mark clearly says, “when the Sabbath was past;” St. Luke implies that it was before the Sabbath. His words are; the “women also which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His Body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.” We reply, that St. Luke simply says, that being returned, they prepared ointments; but that he does not say expressly whether it was before or after the Sabbath; and if he speaks of it before, subjoining what he says about the observance of the Sabbath, it is by anticipation. The “Glossa ordinaria” harmonises these two Gospels, by saying that these

holy women bought sweet spices before the Sabbath, but that not having sufficient to satisfy their devotion, they bought more afterwards. It might be said too, that they went to the dealers in these articles before the Sabbath, in order to secure betimes what they wished to take away very early in the morning after the feast.

It may be next asked, at what hour they came to the sepulchre. St. Matthew says, that it was "in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week." St. John says, that it was "early, when it was yet dark." But St. Mark says, that "they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Some reply, that St. Mark, by "the rising of the sun," means the break of day, when the sun, not being yet above the horizon, it is still dark. Others say that the holy women left their home very early in the morning, before it was light, which is what St. John and St. Matthew remark; but that they did not reach the sepulchre till sun-rise, when it was beginning to appear above the horizon, as says St. Mark.

SECOND REMARK.

St. Chrysologus, speaking of the Tomb of CHRIST, says, "that the stone which by the Jews had been placed for a gate of death, an attendant on ashes, for a mournful silence," that so He might no more be spoken of, became transformed by a wondrous change, into the "seat of Angels, the pulpit of Heavenly doctrine, and the school of Life⁶." Following this thought, we will look upon the Sepulchre

⁶ Factus est lapis vas angelicæ sessionis, doctrinæ cœlestis cathedra, schola vitæ, qui a Judæis ad mortis januam, ad cineris servitium, ad triste silentium fuerat constitutus. (St. Chrysol. *serm.* 75.)

of JESUS as the school of Life, and the stone of His Sepulchre as the pulpit of Angels, and thence learn how we ought to love, seek and visit our Dear Master, and bury ourselves with Him, that with Him we may rise again.

FIRST POINT.

Consider that the love these holy women bore to CHRIST, and which made them go to His Sepulchre so early, was a constant love, which was stronger than death. For they ceased not to remember Him when He was lost to their sight, as Men of this world do: they fondly treasured the memory of Him in their heart, where He still lived after His Death; this love followed Him even to the grave, fulfilling what the Wise Man said, "that a true friend loveth at all times, yea, beyond time, even in eternity." The historian of the Jews, in his "Antiquities," has thence taken occasion to say, as being of rare occurrence, "that they who had loved Him during His Life ceased not to love Him after His Death, though He had been accused by the rulers of His people, and condemned by Pilate to the punishment of the Cross'."

Is it thus that thou lovest Him? Dost thou often remember Him during the day, and during the night when thou awakest? Is it an active remembrance? Does it lead thee to mortification, to the practice of good works? Dost thou strive to awaken it in thyself, and in others? Dost thou seek opportunities so to do? Art thou well pleased when others speak to thee of Him? It is thought that Mary Magdalene invited the others to come with her to the Grave of JESUS. Thy morning prayer ought to render thee this good service, and quicken all the actions of the day with a holy fervor and a loving

⁷ Josephus, lib. xviii. Antiquit. c. 4.

remembrance of thy most Sweet Redeemer. Make this practice familiar to thee; say to Him often during the day: "LORD, Thou art all my joy: my soul refused to be comforted: I remembered God, and was glad ^s."

SECOND POINT.

Consider that the love of these holy women was very generous, and very courageous: generous, for they had probably seen the Body of JESUS CHRIST embalmed, and yet they still bought sweet spices and precious ointments, in order to satisfy their devotion: courageous, for they feared not their own trouble any more than the cost, and although they knew that soldiers were guarding the Sepulchre, and that they could not roll away the stone which closed its entrance, it did not hinder them from executing their generous enterprise, or from diligently walking in all the darkness of those dim shadows which the sun had not as yet dispersed.

Learn, in the first place, to be courageous amid the difficulties which befall thee, when the execution of thy good resolutions is in question. The soul which trusts in God fears nothing: it says in the fervour of its love: "I can do all things through Him Who instrengtheneth me." A coward soul fears everything, the least opposition discourages and disheartens it. In whatever state thou art, if thou dost desire to serve our LORD, thou wilt ever find some stone in thy way to hinder thee. The stone which stands in the way of penitents, is their proneness to evil; that which opposeth the advancing, the difficulty they find in doing well: the stone which stops the contemplative soul in its heavenward flight, is the dependence it places upon material nature, and sensible images of earthly objects, which hinder the per-

^s Ps. lxxvi. 4. Vulg.

fect union of the mind with God¹. But if thou dost love JESUS CHRIST, this stone, by the Grace of the Holy Spirit, will oftentimes be rolled away at the very first longing of the soul which seeketh God².

Learn, in the second place, to be generous towards God. Divine Love never saith, *it is enough*. It desires to share, as much as in it lies, in all good works, and to contribute its part towards the consolation of the poor, who are the members of JESUS CHRIST, upon whom we must pour the most precious ointment of Christian charity.

When there is some service to be done to the Son of God, spare neither thy goods, nor thy comforts, nor thy trouble, nor thy humiliation, nor anything whatsoever which He desireth of thee, or which may be well pleasing in His Sight; but say to Him, with St. Paul, "LORD, what wilt Thou have me to do?" I will gladly give all that I have to please Thee, and I will even give myself also for the glory of Thy Name, and the salvation of souls.

THIRD POINT.

Consider that the love these holy women bore our LORD was accompanied with great reverence and peculiar discretion; for, although they had a longing desire to go to His Sepulchre to anoint Him,

¹ In quolibet statu est aliquid lapis obstands, ne quis possit intrare in intima mentis, et exercere actus suo statui competentes. Lapis obstands poenitentibus est pronitas ad malum; lapis obstands proficientibus est difficultas ad bonum; lapis obstands contemplativis est materialitas specierum. (*Ludolphus in vita Christi*, p. 2, c. 71.)

² Sed iste lapis pro quolibet statu sæpe removetur ad primum desiderium animæ querentis per gratiam Spiritus Sancti. (*Ibid.*)

³ "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you: though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." 2 Cor. xii. 15.

yet they waited till the Sabbath was past, that they might observe the appointment of the law: but as soon as the following day began to dawn, they set out without delay, in order to teach thee that thy zeal for JESUS CHRIST must not be rash, but neither must it be slow or languid.

True love to the Son of God is equally fervent and discreet; it doth all things "decently and in order," according to the Apostle's words⁴: it doth not behave itself unseemly⁵. It doth each thing in its own time, according as rule or obedience prescribes. Blessed is he who liveth in light⁶, who walketh not in darkness, who beginneth all his actions by the light of grace, and faithfully followeth it in all things. By it God began all His beauteous work at the creation of the world: "Let there be light." Pray Him thus to begin the conversion and the regulation of thy life. For if He saith to thee, "Let there be light," there will be no interval between the word and the effect. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." God said, "Let there be light," and instantly at His Word the effect followed: in order to teach thee, as Tertullian says, "that with God to say and to do is alike one".

This ought to encourage thee in the pursuit of virtue, and oblige thee to turn to prayer in all thine actions, that the light of heaven may enlighten them, and Divine love quicken them.

O LORD, Thou didst say, "Let the heavens be made," and Thy Word was fulfilled as soon as spoken. Once Thou didst command the stars to shine in the firmament, and without delay Thou wast obeyed. How is it that Thou dost so often

⁴ 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

⁵ 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

⁶ Felix, qui in luce vitam suam instituit. (*Bæza. hic.*)

⁷ Dixit Deus: Fiat, et factum est, ut tibi totus Deus commendaretur et dicere, et facere. (*Tert. c. Marc. ii.*)

says to me: "Be humble, dying, and rising," and yet Thy warnings and Thy commands are without effect: Is not Thy Word Almighty? I know, O my God, that it is mine own rebellious will which resisteth Thee, but Thou canst bend it. Bend it then, O Lord, of Thy great Mercy; roll away this stone which hinders my perfection, that I may walk joyfully in the narrow way of Thy statutes, for therein is my desire.

**Meditation for the Second Monday after
Easter.**

**THE ANGELS APPEAR TO THE HOLY WOMEN,
AND TEACH US HOW WE MUST SEEK CHRIST.**

"Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus Which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said." Matt. xxviii. 5, 6.

FIRST REMARK.

As the holy women drew near, "there was a great earthquake," says St. Matthew; "for the Angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of Him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the Angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye." St. Jerome says, "that the soldiers escaped away, or that if they were still at the Sepulchre when the women arrived, fear had so seized upon

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them that they dared not hinder them." So that it may well be believed that the women saw them fall upon the ground "as dead men," and herein had cause to admire the Almightyness of Him Whom they were seeking among the dead.

SECOND REMARK.

Some may ask, Where was the stone which the Angel rolled back? For there were two chambers, as it were, or two caverns hewn in the rock, and consequently two entries into the Sepulchre, one without, the other within. The question then is: Were there two stones? or, if there were but one, (as the Evangelist implies pretty clearly,) in which place was it? We answer that it closed the outward entrance, and that within was open. The Angel rolled it back and sat upon it, not in order to facilitate the coming forth of the Son of God, for He was already risen from the dead, but to give sensible tokens of His Resurrection to these holy women, and to teach us by their example, how we too must seek CHRIST Crucified.

FIRST POINT.

Consider how gracious our Lord is to those who seek Him". The kind services which the Angel renders these holy women are certain proofs thereof. For for them he descends from Heaven; for them, he rolls away the stone from the Sepulchre; for them, he sits down, in order to teach and prepare them for receiving the first visit of the Risen JESUS: for them, he puts to flight the Roman soldiers, in order to remove all cause for fear. "Fear not ye," saith He to them, "for I know that ye seek JESUS, Which was Crucified." What, indeed, need the soul

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fear, which seeketh CHRIST? Need it fear penitence? It is a very heavy stone, and hard to bear. But the Angel of the LORD, that is to say, the grace of the Holy Spirit, maketh it light¹. Need it fear temptation? It is Thou, O LORD, Who dost "light my candle;" "my God, enlighten my darkness," for by Thee shall I be delivered from temptation; and "by the help of my God I shall leap over the wall²." Need it fear poverty, or contempt, or calamities, or the miseries of this world? "God is our Refuge and Strength; a very present Help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea³." Need it fear the loss of man's respect, or the power of the enemies who oppose its good designs? "The LORD is with us; fear them not⁴," said Joshua to the children of Israel, who were terrified at the report which the spies of Palestine had brought back, that they had seen "giants" of great stature, in whose sight they "were but as grasshoppers." The success of our enterprizes depends not on the power of men, but on the protection and favour of the Almighty. How often hast thou experienced the care which JESUS CHRIST takes of His faithful servants, and the goodness with which His Fatherly Providence sustains them in their weaknesses, raises them from their falls, protects them in their dangers, comforts them in their afflictions, and encourages them to seek after virtue by His Divine Illuminations!

"O LORD, gracious art Thou to those who hope in Thee, to the soul which seeketh Thee⁵!" What ought we not to do in return for this Thy love, and how

¹ "For my yoke is easy and my burden light."—Matt. xii. 30.

² Ps. xviii. 28, 29.

⁴ Num. xiv. 9.

³ Ps. xlv. 1, 2.

⁵ Lam. iii. 25.

are we bounden to seek Thy greater Glory in all things!

SECOND POINT.

Consider how we must seek CHRIST, as did these holy women in the Gospel.

1st. We must first seek CHRIST Crucified, that we may hereafter see Him Glorified. "Many seek JESUS, that is, the Author of Salvation, but not JESUS Crucified," because they desire to be saved, but they desire not to suffer. They seek JESUS, but "they seek Him not on the Cross, yet there only is He found⁶." "Go where thou wilt, seek as thou wilt, thou wilt find no way either more excellent or more safe, than the way of the Cross of JESUS. Why then dost thou fear to embrace the Cross, since it leadeth to heaven, and in it is JESUS found? In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection against our enemies, in the Cross is infusion of Heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit, in the Cross is the height of virtue, in the Cross the perfection of sanctity. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life, but in the Cross⁷." Take up Thy cross then, and follow JESUS Crucified, that thou mayest live eternally with JESUS Risen.

2dly. In the second place, we must seek CHRIST Crucified, with great singleness of intention, that is to say, through pure love, free from all admixture of temporal interest. The kingly prophet says, "in the time of my trouble I sought the LORD, and was not disappointed⁸." His intention was good, because he had turned to God, that He might help him in his

⁶ Multi quærent JESUM, id est, Salvatorem, sed non crucifixum, quia non per crucem, cum tamen ille nonnisi in ista invenitur. (*Ludolphus, in vita Christi*, p. 2.)

⁷ L. ii. de Imit. JESU CHRISTI, c. 12, 3.

⁸ Ps. lxxvi. 2. Vulg. see Ps. lxxxvi. 7.

necessity; but it was not unmixed. That of the spouse was far more pure, and far more disinterested, for she sought God, not from interest, but from love; not only because she needed Him, but because she loved Him⁹. It was not affliction which forced, but affection which drew her thus to seek Him¹. Better far to seek God through love than through unloving need².

3rdly. In the third place; in order to seek with singleness of heart CHRIST Jesus Crucified, we must seek Him in the Light of God. For, in order to seek the Cross, we must be greatly enlightened by the light of faith; and, in order to love CHRIST Crucified, we must have the strong light of wisdom, to teach us how worthy He is of love, even on to sufferings and death. "In vain ye rise up early, and so late take rest³." The spouse "sought Him by night and found Him not." Thou must wait then for the light of the Holy Spirit, and imitate those blessed women, who allowed the night to pass, and awaited the break of day for to go to the Sepulchre. However much a soul may labour in order to seek CHRIST, she finds Him not, if the light of the Holy Ghost dawn not upon the darkness of Her heart⁴. Hence it is that so few seek God purely for God, because so few have light enough to know, by experimental knowledge, how good it is to serve God for love of Himself. Wherefore, Jeremiah speaking of those who seek God, because they hope to obtain

⁹ I sought Him whom my soul loveth.—Cant. iii. 1.

¹ Longe differentior quærendi ratio nunc a sponsa proponitur. Illam non compellit afflictio, sed trahit affectio. (*Gilbert. Abbas. serm. 2 in Cant.*)

² Multo potior in diligente, quam in indiligente quærendi ratio. (*Ibid.*)

³ Ps. cxxvii. 2.

⁴ Licet laborem quærendo impendat, non tamen invenit quem requirit, nisi illuxerit dies. (*Apon. 5 in Cant.*)

some good from Him, uses the plural number, saying: "The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him;" but of those who seek God wholly free from self-interest, he uses the singular only: "The Lord is good to the soul that seeketh Him." And wherefore? "Because," says Saint Bernard, "it is an act of singular purity, and of rare perfection, not only to hope for nothing except from God, but also to seek nothing but God."⁵ There are few who reach this degree of virtue; strive hard to attain to it, and rest not till thou canst say—I seek God Alone.

This is the resolution which I now make, O my SAVIOUR, in Thy Divine Presence. My heart hath often said it of Thee, and my face hath often sought Thee; but now I desire to seek Thee anew, more fervently than ever. "Thy Face, LORD, will I seek;" "My God, hide not Thou Thy Face from me, nor cast Thy servant away in displeasure; Thou hast been my succour, leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."⁶

THIRD POINT.

Consider, as shown forth by the three Marys, how they who seek Jesus, find Him at the end of their search. They sought CHRIST Crucified, they found Him Risen⁷. They sought Him in the grave among the dead, they found Him Living and Glorious⁸.

This is the favour which thou mayest hope from the goodness of the SON of GOD, if thou seek Him with thy whole heart. Love virtue whilst God giveth thee life: thou wilt find glory in the tomb⁹. Trifling is the glory of mortal men; there thou wilt

⁵ S. Bern. serm. vi. in Ps. Qui habitat.

⁶ Ps. xxvii. 8.

⁷ Ibid. v. 9.

⁸ He is not here, He is risen. (Luke xxiv. 5, 6.)

⁹ Why seek ye the Living among the dead? He is not here, He is risen.

¹⁰ Virtutem cole dum vivis, famam reperies in sepulchro.

find the glory of the saints; there thou wilt find an immortal crown; there thou wilt find JESUS CHRIST, Who will make thee to sit on His throne, and will fill thee with honour and joy. Contemplate that Angel who is sitting on the stone of the Sepulchre, he represents to thee the state of bliss which JESUS hath gained for thee by His Death. His countenance shining like lightning, sheweth thee the brightness of glorious bodies, which "shall shine more brightly than the sun." His raiment whiter than snow, marks the joy of the Resurrection which is a day of triumph for Him and thee¹; and if he is seated upon the stone of the Sepulchre, it is to tell thee that the state of the blessed is unchangeable, and that thou must not complain of momentary toil, in order to enjoy eternal rest.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, Which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again by the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead, unto a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you who are kept by the Power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried in fire, might be found unto praise and honour, and glory, at the appearing of JESUS CHRIST, Whom not having seen ye love, in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls²."

¹ Candida stola coopertus Angelus apparuit, quia festivitatis nostræ gaudia nuntiavit. (*S. Greg.*)

² 1 Pet. i. 3—9.

Meditation for the Second Tuesday after Easter.

**THE ANGELS CAUSE THE HOLY WOMEN TO
ENTER THE TOMB OF CHRIST, AND TEACH
US HOW WE MUST BURY OURSELVES WITH
HIM, THAT WITH HIM WE MAY RISE AGAIN.**

“Come see the place where the LORD lay.”—Matt. xxviii. 6.

REMARK.

THE holy women who were come to the Sepulchre saw not one Angel only, but many, who all assured them that the LORD was risen again, and show them the place where He had been laid. The first Angel they beheld was he who had rolled back the stone, and made them go into the tomb, saying, “Come see the place where the LORD lay.” St. Matthew speaks only of this one.

The second who appeared to them, was he of whom St. Mark speaks in these words: “Entering into the Sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, ‘Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, Which was crucified, He is risen; He is not here, behold the place where they laid Him.’”

Not having found the Body of the LORD JESUS, Saint Luke says, “they were very much perplexed thereabout,” and that then, “behold two men stood by them in shining garments. And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said to them, Why seek ye the living

³ Mark xvi. 5, 6.

among the dead? Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."

FIRST POINT.

Consider that the sight of the tomb ought not to affright us. The holy women entered it, that, buried with the Lord, they might rise again to the full assurance of faith⁴. It were a shame then for us to shun the thought of it. The remembrance thereof is alike useful and pleasing. We ought to think of it often and joyfully, because the Son of God hath made it a place of rest, a place of glory, and a passage to eternal bliss.

Fear not, it is a place of rest, where our bodies are, as it were, laid up in store and in safe keeping⁵. "The flesh," says Tertullian, "riseth whole and entire. Wheresoever it be, it is laid up with God in the Hands of Jesus Christ, the faithful Mediator between God and man⁶." That which thou callest the death of the body is, to speak truly, but a retirement. When a man dies, God preserveth not his soul only; the body hath its place of retirement where it is placed in store: wheresoever it be, whether in earth, or water, or fire, or in the entrails of beasts or birds, when it seemeth in these to be dissolved, it is as though transfused into certain vessels, thence again to be restored⁷.

⁴ Ingrediuntur sepulcrum, ut consepultæ Domino, totam fidei resurgerent in salutem. (*S. Chrysost.*)

⁵ *S. Chrysost. serm. 77. Vid. Petr. Dam. ep. 151.*

⁶ Resurgit caro integra. In deposito est ubicumque apud Deum per fidelissimum sequestrum Dei et hominum Jesum Christum. (*Tertull. de Resurr. carnis.*) See Tertull. *Apol. c. 48, p. 101, and n. e. Oxf. Tr.*

⁷ Carnis interitum quem putas, secessum scias esse. Non sola anima seponitur, habet et caro secessus suos, in terris,

It is a place of Glory, whence the just will come forth shining bright with the rays of immortality. There all the glory of the world is buried for ever, because it is perishable and mortal; but there the glory of the Saints hath its blessed beginning, because it is a participation of the Glory of Jesus CHRIST, Who began His Kingdom where that of others endeth, a kingdom which shall have no end.

It is a passage to eternal bliss, which the SAVIOUR hath opened to us by His victory over death. Since He hath passed through it, His Grave has become as glorious as the highest Heaven, and the Angels who announced His Resurrection gladly quitted Paradise, and came to sit upon the stone of His Sepulchre as though it were the very heaven⁸. Who then will henceforth fear the dust and darkness of the tomb, since it is the source of immortal life, and the place of our glorious new birth? St. Zeno, to take from us the fear of death, and oblige us often to think of it by the hope of the Resurrection, sets before us the example of the sun, which is daily born again and dies on the same day of its birth, without slackening its course a single moment through fear of approaching death: on the contrary, it goeth forward with exceeding diligence, as a strong giant, towards night which is its tomb, well knowing that from thence it will begin life anew⁹. But the example of my SAVIOUR, the true "Sun of Righteousness," makes much deeper impression on my heart. This it was which comforted Job in the midst of his greatest sufferings, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day

in aquis, in ignibus, in alitibus, in bestiis: cum in hæc dissolvi videtur, quasi in vasa transfunditur, ut rursus ex illis præsentetur. (*Ib.*)

⁸ Ad sepulcrum tanquam ad cælum manebant. (*S. Chrysol.*)

⁹ Intrepidus ad sepulcrum noctis contendit, sciens in ipso habere, quod vivit. (*S. Zen. serm. de Resurr.*)

upon the earth, and after I shall awake, in my flesh shall I see GOD my SAVIOUR, Whom I shall see for myself, mine eyes shall behold, and not another¹." This hope is laid up deep within my heart; who can shake it²? O wondrous patience, mighty effect of the hope of the Resurrection! This holy man had, so to say, but three parts left, which could feel, eyes, lips, and heart; the rest of his face was eaten with cancer, his body covered with boils³. And having only these three parts of his body free, his lips speak but of the Resurrection, his eyes await this one thing alone, his heart lives on its hope. The remembrance of his Redeemer, Who shall one day change the vile and abject state of our bodies, and make them like unto His Glorious Body, keeps his tongue, even in this extreme affliction, from murmuring against Providence; his eyes beholding the miserable state to which he is reduced, yet abhor not his misery; his heart is not saddened thereby: yea, on the contrary, he loves better to lie on his dung-hill, than to sit upon a throne⁴; he takes more pleasure in beholding the worms which creep in his flesh, than the brilliancy of precious stones which sparkle on the diadem of kings; and the nobleness of his ancestors seems to him less honourable than "corruption" which he calls his "father," because it was to beget him unto eternity⁵.

SECOND POINT.

Consider that in order to rise again with the Son of God; it is not enough to come and behold His

¹ Job xix. 25, 26.

² Ib. 27, Vulg.

³ Ib. xiii. 14.

⁴ Ipse sedebat super acervum stercoris, plus sibi de vermicibus atque stercore, quam de regni gloria complacens. (*Origen. de Job, c. 2.*)

⁵ Job xvii. 14.

Tomb, as did these holy women; we must enter it with them. It is not enough to think often of His Death; we must die with Him, and be buried with Him. If the grain of wheat fall not into the furrow, and if the husbandman bury it not deep in the heart of the earth that it may die there, it beareth no fruit. St. Hilary says⁶, "that the great sheet knit at the four corners," which appeared to St. Peter, filled with all manner of beasts, represented the different nations who were to receive the faith; but that they were all enclosed in this one sheet, thereby signifying That in which JESUS CHRIST had been buried, in order to teach the members that they must be buried with their head⁷. What meaneth this? must we be buried that we may die? Must we not be dead before we are buried? Yea, verily: but in order to rise again with our LORD, we must die once more after being buried; and not once only, but "daily;" by a continual death, a death which may be in some way an everliving death. For as the sepulchre consumes the body which is consigned to it, continually eating away its flesh, its muscles, and the marrow of its bones, so that it destroys, and almost entirely annihilates it, so must the body of sin be continually destroyed in every thing; its roots, (which are evil habits,) torn up; and its very marrow be dried up, that is, the inclinations of corrupt nature. "Know ye not," says St. Paul to the Romans, "that so many of us as were baptized unto JESUS CHRIST, were baptized into His Death; therefore we are buried with Him by baptism, into death, that like as CHRIST was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life? For if we have been planted toge-

⁶ *S. Hilar. cap. 33 in Matth.*

⁷ *Rom. vi. 4.*

⁸ *1 Cor. xv. 31.*

then in the likeness of His Death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we might not serve sin." "Behold," says St. Chrysostome on these words, "Behold the sure token that we possess CHRIST JESUS, and that His Spirit lieth in us; namely, when our bodies differ in no respect from those already in the grave." A dead man, buried and hidden in his grave, cares no more for the goods of the earth; he has not the least desire for the honours of the world; he feels no rising of vanity when praised, no resentment when ill-treated, no anger when blamed; he is alike insensible to insult and praise, to injuries and caresses, to pleasure and pain. Such is the ideal of a Christian wholly mortified, who follows not the fleshly appetite, who has dried up all the springs of voluptuousness, who lives as if he had neither flesh nor skin, like those dead men's bones, all fleshless and dry, to whom the prophet Ezekiel prophesied saying, "Hear ye the word of the LORD." When thou hast attained this degree of perfection, thou wilt be fit for the service of God. With less than this, thou wilt make little progress, and will never be firmly rooted in virtue.

THIRD POINT.

Consider, that in order to rise again with CHRIST, thy heart must be the tomb of His precious Heart, and His Heart must be thine. The sacred Body of JESUS CHRIST Which we receive at Easter, as the pledge of our resurrection, is in a state of mystic

* Hoc depum signum est Christum nos habere, Spiritumque ejus in nobis esse, cum corpora nostra ab iis corporibus nihil differunt, quæ tumulis recondita jacent.

¹ Ezek. xxxvii. 4. Vide Tilmanuum in loc.

death upon the Altar. It needeth a clean linen wherein to be buried, sweet spices wherewith to be anointed, a grave wherein to be laid, a seal wherewith to close the sepulchre, and soldiers to keep watch over it. Now, He desireth no other linen cloth than thy innocency of soul, no other spices than the sweet savour of thy virtues, no other Grave than thy heart, sealed with the seal of His love, and guarded by the band of Angels, to defend its entrance.

The ancients had a custom of collecting the ashes of their friends in a gold or silver heart, in token of their wish, had it been in their power, to place them in their own hearts*. Thou hast this advantage, that thou canst place in thine the Best of all thy friends, even thy most sweet SAVIOUR. Happy wouldst thou be if thy heart were worthy to receive Him, if it had all the purity, fervour, and devotion befitting His Sepulchre! This was the desire of St. Mechthildes, at the holy season wherein we celebrated the glory of Christ's Tomb, and of His blessed Resurrection. "Would to God," said she, "my most dear SAVIOUR, that my heart were of ivory, and that I were allowed to fashion it in the form of a Tomb, that I might bury Thee there, with all the honour of which the powers of my soul are capable!"

Imitate the devotion of this great saint; purify thy heart, make of it a new sepulchre, by a firm resolution to lead a new life. But take heed that its inscription be not like that of the Sepulchre, that it be not said, "He is risen, He is not here." Woe to the heart where CHRIST is not! Act so that He may abide in thine, and never leave it. Live in His Heart. It is thy life. Keep Him carefully in thine,

* Plutarch, in his treatise on funerals.

* S. Mechthild. l. 2. Gratia, c. 16.

it is thy glory that He should ever live there. For, then, of a sepulchre He will make a Heaven, agreeably to the beautiful thought of Saint Chrysologus: "the heart wherein CHRIST lives and reigns is a heaven; that wherein He is dead and buried is a sepulchre⁴." Remember that Easter-time is, as Saint Bernard says, a time of passing onward; make it not a time of going back. Return not to thine evil habits, but follow the advice of the Angel; go into Galilee, which means a place of passage; pass on from vice to virtue, from darkness to light, from earth to Heaven. There shalt thou see Him in His glory, with the certainty of never losing Him⁵.

Meditation for the Second Wednesday after Easter.

MARY MAGDALENE WITH HER COMPANIONS, BRINGS THE FIRST TIDINGS TO THE APOSTLES OF WHAT THEY HAD SEEN AT THE TOMB OF THE SON OF GOD; AND UPON THEIR REPORT S. PETER AND S. JOHN GO WITH HASTE TO THE SEPULCHRE, IN ORDER TO ASSURE THEMSELVES PERSONALLY OF THE TRUTH.

"Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."—John xx. 2.

REMARK.

Saint John does not speak of the other women who accompanied the Magdalene; whence Saint

⁴ Sicut illud cor cœlum est in quo vivit et regnat Christus, ita illud pectus sepulcrum, in quo Christus adhuc habetur mortuus et sepultus.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 7.

Augustine infers that she was alone; but the words, "We know not where they have laid Him," shows that she was in company with others, and the other Evangelists expressly say so. The same Apostle passes over in silence the appearance of the Angel who rolled back the stone from the Sepulchre, and makes mention of Peter and John only, not naming the other disciples, because those two only ran to the Tomb, in order to make themselves clear concerning the vision of these devout women, which the others took for merely "idle tales," as St. Luke says.

FIRST POINT.

Consider what Saint Chrysologus says, that it is by a Divine appointment that the holy women go first to the Tomb of CHRIST, and that the Angel sends them to the Apostles, to tell them that He is risen again. "It is not an inversion of order, but a mystery" of penitence, fervour, and humility⁶. A mystery of penitence; for, as this father says, "woman first hasteth to weep, who first hastened to fall; she goeth first to the sepulchre, who went first to death; she is made the messenger of the Resurrection, who was the messenger of death".

Not that any advantage is thereby given to the devout women over the Apostles. Greater things are reserved for them. "The holy women minister at the LORD's Burial; but the Apostles partake of His Sufferings. Those bear spices, these scourgings. Those go into the Sepulchre, these into prisons. Those pour sweet ointments, these their blood. Finally, those bring tears to JESUS; these, Satan

⁶ Non est hic præposterus ordo, sed mysticus. (*S. Chrys. serm. 79.*)

⁷ Mulier prima currit ad lacrymas, quæ prima cucurrit ad lapsum; præcedit ad sepulcrum, quæ præcessit ad mortem; fit Resurrectionis nuntia, quæ fuit mortis interpres.

subdued and the enemy vanquished, bring Him back victories and triumphs^a."

Neither must we wonder if they do not at once believe the vision of the women. It is, an act of infidelity to be unwilling to believe any thing; but it is an act of imprudence to believe every thing lightly and indiscreetly; both are equally dangerous. The first man sinned by being too credulous, and Saint Thomas by being too incredulous.

Shun these two extremes. Believe not lightly, and thou wilt not be deceived. Yet lean not too much upon thine understanding; but try the spirits, whether they be of God^b.

Above all, when thou hearest any pious discourse, imitate not those disciples who deserved to be blamed for their little faith, taking for idle tales what was told them of the appearance of the Angels, and of their Master's Resurrection. Make not holy things a subject of jest. Turn not into ridicule the simplicity of those who speak to thee of them. "Religious discourses of spiritual things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially when persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God^c."

SECOND POINT.

Consider again another mystery—a mystery of fervour—shown forth by these two disciples, who "run both together," striving against one another, to the Sepulchre of Christ.

One says, that it is joy which makes them run so earnestly, and that this joy proceeds from the love they bear their Master, and from their belief in His Resurrection. Magdalene, saith he, not finding the

^a Ibidem.

^b Decipi non potest, qui non est facilis auditui. (*S. Chrysost. l. c.*)

^c De Imit. Chris. lib. i. cap. 10.

Body of the Lord, imagines that some one has taken It away, and complains of the loss she hath sustained, saying, "They have taken away the Lord out of the Sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him." But Peter, who knew² that His Master was to rise again, because He had foretold it before His Death, grieves not at the tidings, neither does he weep; but rather rejoice. His faith and love fill Him with gladness. He runs in great haste to the Sepulchre, to return the more joyous if he find not Him he seeks³.

Observe here two marked effects, the one, of faith, and the other of love to Jesus Christ. "He that loveth, flieth, runneth, rejoiceth; he is free and cannot be held in. Love feels no burden⁴." It is an enemy to lukewarmness and negligence in all which regards the service of God. The joy that it hath in serving Him, fills it with fervour⁵. "Love thinks nothing of trouble, complains not of impossibility: for it thinks all things lawful for itself, and all things possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and it completes many things, and causes them to take effect⁶."

He who has great faith, and who looks beyond this present life, is not disturbed at the fear of death, nor at the loss of his friends, nor at the ruin of his fortune: but he ever rises upwards like a bright and burning flame, because he knoweth "That for us there is another world, more exalted and far

² The author of this homily is blamed by some editors as speaking herein contrary to Luke and John xx.—Ed. Ben.

³ Sub tali nuntio non flevit, aut doluit. Ad sepulcrum celeri cursu festinat, lætior rediturus, si non inveniret quem querebat. (*Serm. 158 in App. S. Aug.*)

⁴ De Imit. Christ. lib. iii. c. 5.

⁵ Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

⁶ De Imit. Christ. lib. iii. c. 5.

more fasting than what we have beheld with our eyes⁷.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, attributes the race between St. Peter and St. John to a holy and laudable emulation; which he proposes to us as a pattern by which we ought to model ourselves. "Become a Peter and John, fervently hasten to the sepulchre, running together, outrunning, striving with a noble strife. And if thou be surpassed in speed, overcome thou in zeal, not stooping down only to look into the sepulchre, but thyself enter there⁸." This is a virtue belonging to great Saints, who would grieve much, were any to outstrip them, or be beforehand with them in those duties wherein humility and charity are exercised. Thus Abraham ran to meet the pilgrims, lest another should invite them before him, and thus rob him of his prize. "See that holy aged man," says St. Chrysostome, "he runs, he flies, for he beholds the prey; and counting not his weakness, he speeds to make it his; he calls not his servants; but himself runs almost as if saying, Here is a rich treasure, a great merchandise; I must by myself traffic in this, lest so great a gain escape me⁹." Hence learn with how great diligence thou shouldest hasten to meet the poor, whom thou wouldest receive out of charity into thy house, lest another be beforehand with thee, and deprive thee of the reward of the holy office¹. It is a crown which

⁷ Maccabees, ap. S. Greg. Naz. Or. 15. § 5. He adds, "And our country is the heavenly Jerusalem, which no Antiochus can besiege. Wherefore cease to hold out to us petty things of no worth."

⁸ S. Greg. Naz. Orat. 45. (2 de Pascha.) § 24.

⁹ S. Chrys. Hom. 41. in Gen. xviii. § 3.

¹ Disce quam impiger esse debeas, ut possis prævenire hospitem, ne quis præveniat, et te boni muneris defraudet. (S. Ambr. l. i. de Abraham. c. 5.)

God offers thee, take heed lest another take it from thee.

THIRD POINT.

Consider a third mystery of humility in the deference which St. John pays to St. Peter. "They ran both together, but the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre, and stooping down, he saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre; and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about His Head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed."

St. John represents the contemplative, St. Peter the active life. Both run together, for no one, whatsoever be his condition, should stop in the path of virtue, till he has reached the grave, which is the end of his journey: he whom God calls to the contemplative life, walks more quickly, and attains more speedily to perfection; but the greater his progress, the greater his humility and submission, well knowing what St. Paul said: "the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee¹;" because although it be the most honourable, nevertheless the hand is the most industrious. "Then," says St. Gregory Nyssen², "is the action of the eye most seen, when deeds bear witness to its quick sight, showing its good guidance by earnestness in good." The eye points to the crown, the hand takes it. The eye discovers the enemy, but the hand fights and gains the victory. Finally, the eye contemplates heaven, but the hand opens it, and good works obtain it.

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 21.

² S. Greg. Nyss. hom. in Cant. t. i. p. 677.

O. my glorious and Divine Master, Who givest light to our eyes, and strength to our hands, that they may be employed in Thy service, light afresh in our hearts the fire of Thy love, that it may kindle our lukewarmness, and give us fresh strength to run in the way of Thy commandments, and to seek Thee no longer in the grave, amid the dead, but in heaven, where Thou reignest amongst the saints.

Meditation for the Second Thursday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH FIRST TO MARY MAGDALENE.

"Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping."—
John xx. 11.

REMARK.

THE Apostles having seen the Tomb open, and the linen clothes lying there, believed that their Master was risen from the dead, and went away again unto their own home. St. John speaks but of himself; "He saw and believed⁴." St. Luke merely says, that "St. Peter departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass." But St. Cyril and St. Chrysostome say, plainly, that these two disciples having seen the linen clothes, were confirmed in the truth of the Resurrection, and returned from the Sepulchre full of joy and hope. "Their faith," says St. Jerome, "was greater than that of the Magdalene, because they believed the Resurrection of the Lord without having seen either it, or Him, or even the Angels, who disappeared on their arrival. But the love of Mary showed itself the more, for she remained

⁴ John xx. 8.

near the Sepulchre, weeping incessantly, and seeking her LORD, not knowing where they had laid Him. It was therefore given to her to see Him before all the rest, because she had shown greater love and longing to find Him. "She⁵ attained the first to joy, who was kindled with greatest longing."

FIRST POINT.

Consider the blessedness of this holy lover of CHRIST, to whom was vouchsafed the very first sight of her Risen LORD. She obtained this favour by the fervour of her desires, and the abundance of her tears and her perseverance. Three signal effects of her love⁶.

1 Her love for the Son of GOD, inspired her with an earnest desire to go to His Tomb and anoint His Body; and not having found Him, this same love impelled her to seek for Him with exceeding eagerness, thinking that some one had taken Him away, and ardently longing to know where He had been laid, that she might pay Him this last duty. Her longing showed the weakness of her faith; but as it proceeded from a heart burning with the fire of love, it fitted her specially for receiving the favour which our Lord willed to bestow upon her. For He is ever wont to excite in us ardent desires, because He delights to satisfy them, and do us good. O Goodness Infinite! Satisfied with a good desire, and making it the measure of Its gifts! O hardness of my heart, so little deserving the treasures of heaven! I marvel not that I am poor, but I do marvel that being able to become rich, I neglect to buy those infinite treasures, which cost nothing but the wish.

⁵ *Prima meretur gaudia, quæ plus ardebat cæteris.*

⁶ S. Cyril in Joan. xx. 10. "Mary, the lover of CHRIST, as being free from all fear, sits and cannot be sated with gazing; her tears flow down insatiably from her eyes." (*S. Jer. Ep. ad Hedib. q. 4.*)

2 Magdalene not finding Whom she sought, began to weep, and her tears had no less power over her Master's Heart, than her desires. For Mary, by weeping, obtained from JESUS all that she would: she wept, and her sins were forgiven; she wept, and her brother was raised from the dead; she wept, and was consoled by the sight of Angels, and the King of Angels risen⁷. By tears of holy compunction, she washed out her sins; she shed tears of compassion, and Lazarus was raised from the dead; and tears of devotion and love gained her the joy of seeing the Risen JESUS.

O constant and faithful love, which overcame every obstacle that was a hindrance to her desire! Fear obliged the disciples to return to their homes, after having seen the Sepulchre: the other devout women followed their example; but Magdalene still remained by the Tomb. Love and sorrow stayed her at that holy place: love, that she might seek Him Whom she had lost; sorrow that she might weep for Him Whom she could not find: both so overpowered her that she was alike insensible to fear and joy. She feared nothing, because having lost her Master, she had no other loss to fear. She was dead to all sense of joy, as she could love nought but JESUS, nought else could comfort her. JESUS was the Life of her soul, and having lost Him, she believed it better for her to die than to live, because by dying, she might find Him, Whom living she sought in vain.

But what need was there for her to die, since love, which "is stronger than death," had already outstripped it, by taking from this holy penitent, all of

⁷ Maria enim flendo obtinuit quidquid voluit. Flendo obtinuit veniam peccatorum; flendo obtinuit fratris suscitationem de faucibus infernorum. Flendo obtinuit consolationem de Resurrectione. (*Ludolphus in vita Christi*, p. 2, c. 72.)

which death could rob her. She might be said to have lost all her senses, so wholly was she beside herself! Thus, no wonder is it that the sight of the Angels did not affect her. "Feeling, she felt not; seeing, saw not; hearing, heard not; neither was she there where she was, for she was wholly where her Master was; yet where He was, she knew not⁸." She had forgotten all things, even her own self, remaining, as it were, without feeling, without counsel, without fear, without hope, without action, and without emotion, save that of seeking and weeping. She had already looked many times into the Tomb, to see if JESUS were indeed not there; but she was again stooping down to look in, and could not be weary of so doing, because true love rests not till it finds what it seeks. "She sought Him there first, and found Him not; she persevered in seeking, and so she attained to find Him. Her longings grew by being put off, and growing, could embrace That which they had found⁹." "For holy desires increase by delay: if they thereby decline, they are not true desires. With this love hath he been on fire, whoever hath been able to attain to virtue¹." See if thou dost feel its effects. Are thy good desires burning? Are they efficacious? Are they enduring? Canst thou at least say with the Prophet: O LORD, I have not those generous desires to please Thee and serve Thee which burn

⁸ *Sentiens non sentiebat, videns non videbat, audiens non audiebat, sed neque ibi erat, ubi erat, quia tota erat ubi Magister suus erat, de quo tamen ubi erat nesciebat.*

⁹ *Amanti semel aspexisse non sufficit, quia vis amoris intentionem multiplicat inquisitionis. Quæsit ergo prius, et non invenit, perseveravit ut quæreret, et ideo contigit ut inveniret, actumque est ut desideria dilata crescerent, et crescendo caperent quod invenissent. (S. Greg.)*

¹ *Sancta enim desideria dilatione crescunt; si autem dilatione deficiunt, desideria non fuerunt. Hoc amore arsit, quisquis ad virtutem pertingere potuit.*

in the hearts of the Saints, but my soul longeth for them, and humbly do I ask them of Thee: "my soul breaketh out for the very fervent desire it hath, always unto Thy judgments:" refuse me not, till

SECOND POINT.

Consider the wonderful loving-kindness of JESUS CHRIST, who [vouchsafed first of all to appear to the Magdalene,] to console her; and observe His way of dealing with her, in order to make her more worthy of His visit.

1 Having "stooped down" to look "into the Sepulchre," she saw "two Angels in white sitting, the one at the Head, and the other at the Feet, where the Body of JESUS had lain." They ask her why she weeps; and she answers: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." This is indeed our misery, and fitting cause for our tears: and yet how often do we lose the Presence of CHRIST without complaining! O woeful blindness! some trifle, a mere nothing is taken from us, and we sorrow for it to excess! CHRIST is taken from us, and we weep not. We know not where they have laid Him, and are not disquieted thereat. But thou, where dost thou lay Him? Wouldst thou know where He is? He is in thy heart, if humility be there; if patience, and mortification and love reign there. If these virtues are wanting in thee, thou hast not CHRIST. Thy murmurings, thy vanities, thy self-love, drive Him away, thou hast reason to complain of thyself, in that thy faults have taken thy Master from thee.

2 Whilst Magdalene was saying these words, our Lord comes to the Sepulchre, and so soon as the

* Pa. cxix. 20.

³ "They have taken away my Lord."

Angels perceive Him, they rise in reverence. The Saint seeing them rise, looks behind her to learn the cause. Then Jesus appeareth to her without making Himself known; and saith: ^{in my name} Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the Gardener, saith unto Him: Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. O mighty power of her love for the Son of God! nothing is impossible to her: she undertakes what she can do only by a miracle. She is not wrong in taking Him for a gardener; for He it is Who watered the Church with His Blood on the Day of His Passion, and rose from the dead, that He might plant the world with Faith and every virtue.

^{now} But, Lord, since Thou deignest to Take upon Thee the office of Gardener, why dost Thou not quickly tear up the thorns of uneasiness and in security which wound the heart of Thy dear spouse, and plant therein the faith of Thy Resurrection? She still seeks Thee among the dead: show her that Thou art living and Glorious. She has only before her eyes the image of Thy Wounds and the Sufferings of her Dying God: let her see the radiant ^{glory} of God the Conqueror of death and hell. She begs of Thee to tell her Who hath taken away her Body; she could do no better than address herself to Thee; for none other than Thyself could withdraw Thee from the Tomb, even as none but Thyself could deliver Thee up to death.

Teach her then, where He is Whom she loves better than herself; show her in what glory, what honour, and what a state of Majesty and Greatness Thou hast placed Him. One word from Thy Mouth will suffice to give her peace, and calm the storm which has risen in her soul. If Thou desirest something of her in order to grant her this favour, tell her

what Thou wouldest have her to do : she is ready for all things, nothing astonishes her, nothing seems difficult to her ; there is nothing, how grievous soever it be, which she would not undertake with zealous affection.

Is this thy disposition ? Art thou resolved to do and to suffer all that is needful in order to find God ? Art thou ready to leave all and follow Him ? If not, thou art not worthy to behold Him in His state of Glory.

THIRD POINT.

Consider the Great Power JEsus hath over the heart, and the wondrous change which by a single word His goodness works in that of the Magdalene. He saith unto her, " Mary ;" and she turning herself, answereth at once : " Master." O ! if thou couldest enter into the meaning of these two words : " Master ! Mary !" O ! if thou couldest enter into the two hearts which uttered them, what wonders wouldest thou there behold ! What tenderness and sweetness in the Heart of JEsus ! What joy and loving transport in that of Mary ! She was before in a deep abyss of sadness, which had swallowed up all her senses and all the powers of her soul ; but in an instant the Voice of her Master dispels all clouds from her mind, and fills it with heavenly consolations. Her heart, transported with joy, melts into sweetness at the sight of JEsus : but when about to throw herself at His Feet, that she might kiss Them, He stops her, and saith, " Touch Me not ; for I am not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." Ah LORD ! why dost Thou hinder her from prostrating herself at Thy Feet ? was it not there that she found salvation and the pardon of her sins ? Her heart

seeks its Centre; doth this displease Thee? where shall she go if Thou sendest her away from Thee? "Go," He saith to her "Go to My brethren!" tarry no longer here, but moderate thy joy; enough for thee to know that I am risen. Go and impart to them these glad tidings. They are My brethren by adoption, they are the children of God by grace, as I by Nature; I can leave them no longer in their present affliction. As for thee, thou shalt see Me again before I ascend to My Father, and shalt not lose the fruit of thine obedience.

Learn to moderate thy joy, be it ever so holy and spiritual, lest it lead thee to any irreverence. It is imprudent to give up ourselves wholly to it, and forget that chaste and respectful fear, which ever dreads to lose the grace it hath received.

It is, moreover, a weakness and defect to be too much troubled and cast down in desolation, through want of confidence in the Goodness of God. For He shows us no less love and tenderness in depriving us for a time of the sweetness of His consolations, than in vouchsafing them to us. For He takes them from us, only to oblige us to be more watchful, and induce us to render Him that honour and glory which are His due. This vicissitude is more profitable to us than would be the continual calm which we desire. The acceptableness of the soul consists not in having more of Divine consolations, but in being more submissive to obedience, more rooted in true humility, and more filled with the love of God and man. Fear not to quit Jesus, as did Magdalene, in order to console and succour thy brethren. He will repay thee again with usury what thou hast forsaken.

* Read chap. 7 and 49 of the 4th Book of "The Imitation of Christ."

Meditation for the Second Friday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE HOLY WOMEN AS THEY RETURN FROM THE SEPULCHRE.

“The women departed quickly from the Sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring the disciples word. And as they went to tell the disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail,” &c.—Matt. xxviii. 8, 9.

REMARK.

SAINT MARK says, that “they went out quickly from the Sepulchre, and fled, for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they any thing to any man, for they were afraid.” These two Evangelists seem to contradict each other, but in reality, they agree perfectly. For the holy women departed twice from the Sepulchre to seek the disciples: the first time, in obedience to the Angels, and then Saint Peter and Saint John came themselves to the Sepulchre, and the women returned thither with them; the second time, after these two disciples had gone away. For they went out also without saying any thing to any man, for they were afraid, leaving Magdalene quite alone; and she very soon ran after them, to impart to them her joy; and as she was telling them that she had seen Jesus, and that He was risen again, He appeared to them, and greeted them with wonderful kindness, suffering them to draw near to Him, that they might kiss His Feet and worship Him.

FIRST POINT.

Consider with what loving kindness the Son of God appeared to these holy women; and, after

having admired the tenderness of Thy Master, and His love for the souls which He hath redeemed by His Blood, reflect upon Thyself, and see in how many ways He appeareth to thee, to testify to thee the care He taketh of all which concerns thee. Apply to thyself what Saint Chrysologus says of the three Marys; "Those who run faithfully, Christ meeteth." When thou followest diligently the call of obedience, Jesus meeteth thee, to bless thy labours and crown them with good success. When thou goest to prayers fervently, when thou observest thy rules faithfully, when thou feelest within thee holy thoughts and fervent desires to mortify thyself, or to do some good work, it is Jesus Who cometh unto thee, and Who honoureth thee with His Presence: "He cometh as a Lord to govern thee, as a Father to greet thee, as a Master to teach thee; by love He animates, by fear guards; as a friend greeteth thee, that thou mayest serve him through love, not ~~the~~ through fear," and saith to thee, "I am thy Salvation; thy Joy, and thy Life". Abide in Me, and There shalt thou find peace." "Fear not", I am Thy Support and thy Help." "Let go all passing things, and seek those that be everlasting. What are all temporal and perishable things, but seducing snares, an illusion and a dream? And what can all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creator?"

(Happy is the soul which hearkeneth to the Lord when He speaketh to her, and receiveth from His

¹ Fideliter currentibus occurrit Christus. (S. Chrysol. serm. 80.)

² Occurrit ut Dominus, salutatur ut parens; affectu animatur, servatur timore; salutatur ut per amorem serviant, non fugiant per timorem.

³ Averte.

⁴ Nolite timere.

⁵ L. 3. de Imit. Christ. c. 1.

Mouth the word which comforteth her. Happy the eyes which, being closed to all outward things, are open only to see JESUS when He appeareth. O! my soul, close all the gates of thy senses, that henceforth thou mayest see Him Alone in all things. Think of Him in all places, at all times, in all thine actions, and "He will direct thy paths" to the blessed end of His elect¹⁰. O King of glory, Who by Thy Divine Presence changest our darkness into light, and our tears into joy, go not from me in mine affliction, and hide not Thy Face from me; be favourable unto me at all times, but specially in the hour of my death, when all creatures shall leave me, and the world will drive me away; be Thou ever near me, and I shall not fear mine enemies. Nothing can hurt me if I have the bliss of seeing Thee. "I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me¹."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the various emotions of fear, confidence, love, joy, and reverence, which the unlooked-for Presence of JESUS awakens in the hearts of these holy women. His Goodness gives them confidence; the glory and majesty of His Countenance impress them with fear; joy and love encourage them to draw near to Him; reverence makes them cast themselves at His Feet, embrace Them, and adore Him with deep humility. "They came and held Him by the Feet, and worshipped Him²." Weigh all these words, and strive to profit by them.

"They came (to Him)."¹ Thou must do likewise. Thou must profit by every thing which offers itself, and strive to advance continually towards perfection. When we seek to win some step in virtue, through

¹⁰ In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.—Prov. iii. 6.

¹ Ps. xxii. 4.

² Matt. xxviii. 9.

all which happens to us, then we approach unto Jesus, as saith Gerson³.

"They held Him by the Feet." This is an effect of His goodness, says Saint Chrysologus. None know Jesus Christ till He first approach them; none approach Him, if He draw them not; none possess Him, if He suffer them not to hold Him. But "He⁴ Who allowed Himself to be held, willed to be possessed." It is for us to correspond faithfully to grace when it offers itself; otherwise it floweth away and is lost. The means by which to use it aright is, to humble ourselves before God, and refer to Him the glory of all the good we do.

"They held Him by the Feet." Such is the humiliation that becometh us. "And worshipped Him." Such the honour we should pay Him, saying to Him with the prophet Daniel, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of face⁵," for, without Thee, we do nought but evil.

If thou canst establish thyself in this perfect contempt of self, believe that thou wilt then enjoy the greatest peace of which the soul is capable in this life. Then all these vain imaginations, these foolish troubles, these useless cares which disquiet thee, will disperse; then shalt thou be freed from all thine immoderate fears, and thy soul shall feel the love of self die within her. Aspire to this great good with all thy might, in all thy prayers, and in all thy desires; that wholly stripped of thyself, thou mayest be clothed with Jesus Christ; and dead to thyself, mayest live for ever with Him.

³ Undique captare profectum.

⁴ Haberi se voluit, qui passus est se teneri. (*S. Chrys. serm. 80.*)

⁵ Dan. ix. 7.

THIRD POINT.

Consider the way in which our LORD deals with these holy women, so different from His previous dealing with Magdalene. To her, He said, "Touch Me not." To them, "Be not afraid." He forbiddeth Mary to touch Him, but a little while after, He permitteth both her and the others to kiss His Feet. Which is the most precious, the refusal or the favour?

If herein thou judgest wisely, He is equally Good and Gracious in both. For it is no less an effect of His Goodness, to refuse us what would be hurtful, than to give us what may be useful. "O magnify the LORD our God, and fall down before His footstool, for He is Holy," saith the royal Prophet. Wherefore Holy? He is Holy, because He grants our prayers; He is Holy, because He chastises our evil ways. "Thou heardest them, O LORD our God. Thou forgavest them, O God, and punishedst their own inventions." His Holiness and His Goodness appear equally in both; consequently, He is alike, to be loved and adored, whether He punish or be gracious to us, whether He refuse or grant us what we ask of Him.

Learn, in the first place, that indiscreet fervour is not pleasing to our LORD, and that we must never forget the reverence due to Him; otherwise He rejecteth us, and forbiddeth us to touch Him. But also, on the other hand, He willeth not that we be disquieted by excessive fear, nor by any other disorderly passion. He loveth peace and tranquillity of mind; and when we draw near to Him, we must above all things recollect ourselves, and restore the heart to its natural state, and set it in order to receive Divine communications.

Learn, in the second place, that thou must not suppose thy life to be perfect, when all things happen according to thy desire, nor that thou art especially beloved of God because He grants thee all thy requests, or because thou feelest great tenderness and great fervour in devotion. It is not by these tokens that the truly virtuous is known; it is not in this that the perfection of the spiritual man consists.

Wherein then? In consecrating thyself with thy whole heart to the Will of God, not seeking thine own interest, either in great or in little things, either in time or eternity; that so thou mayest regard alike blessings and evils, and thank CHRIST JESUS alike in both. For then mayest thou be assured that He will come anew into thy soul, filling it with a Heavenly joy in the light of His Presence.

Then will He say to thee, as He did to those holy women, "Be not afraid. Go tell My brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see Me." For if He fill thee with His graces, it is that thou mayest communicate them to others, whom He looks upon and cherishes as His brethren, children of His Father by adoption, and co-heirs of His Kingdom. "He calleth those brethren whom He made to be His kinsmen in the flesh: He calleth those brethren whom He adopted as children of His Father; He calleth those brethren, whom He, the gracious Heir, hath appointed co-heirs with Him⁷."

Imitate His Goodness and His Gentleness towards thy brethren. "Reject no one who asks thy help. If thou canst give, give; if not, show thyself kindly affectioned towards him, and treat him with gentleness. God crowneth a ready will, where He findeth not ability. Say not, thou hast nothing. Charity is not drawn

⁷ Vocat fratres, quos corporis sui fecit esse germanos; vocat fratres, quos Patris sui adoptavit in filios; vocat fratres, quos benignus hæres sibi præstitit cohæredes. (*S. Chrysost. serm. 80.*)

out of the purse¹." "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is Merciful. Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again; and thy reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest; for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil²."

Meditation for the Second Saturday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO SAINT PETER AND SAINT JAMES.

"The LORD is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."—Luke xxiv. 34.

"After that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles."—1 Cor. xv. 7.

REMARK.

THE circumstances of these two appearances are not known; it is only certain by the testimony of Holy Scripture, that JESUS CHRIST did appear to St. Peter on the Day of the Resurrection. As for St. James, we know nothing certain except that our LORD shewed Himself to him in particular, probably also on the very Day of the Resurrection. The Gospel of the Hebrews, according to St. Jerome¹, says, that this Apostle had made an oath to take no food from the time that he drank of the LORD's Cup, till he had seen his Master risen again. In this case it is not likely that the Son of God would will to defer any longer showing Himself to him. It is also said

¹ *Supplicem nullum spernas; si potes dare, da; si non potes, affabilem te præsta. Coronat Deus intus bonitatem, ubi non invenit facultatem. Nemo dicat, non habes. Charitas non de sacculo erogatur. (S. Aug. in Psal. ciii. s. 1. fin.)*

² Luke vi. 36.

³ S. Hieron. in Catal. Scrip. Ecclesiast. in Jacobo.

in the same Gospel, That when He appeared to him, He caused bread to be brought, and having blessed and broken it, He said to him : " My brother, take and eat this bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead." We will then follow in this Meditation, the affections and pious thoughts which holy Fathers and the Masters in the spiritual life have gained in devout meditation, and have left in writing for our instruction.

FIRST POINT.

It is the common opinion of the Fathers, that * St. Peter was the first man to whom our LORD appeared, as Magdalene was the first woman who had the joy of seeing Him when Risen. They add that it was the Day of the Resurrection, very early in the morning, and it is probable that when returning from the Sepulchre, wondering at what had come to pass, our LORD appeared to him by a special favour, which He vouchsafed to him, above all the others, and for this the same holy doctors give many reasons.

The most common opinion has been, that this, like our Blessed Redeemer's appearance to St. Mary Magdalene, was as a comfort and reassurance to all penitents in the person of St. Peter. Thus St. Gregory the Great says², " We have to enquire why, after the disciples had been named, Peter is designated by name. But if the Angel had not mentioned him by name, who had denied his Master, he would not have ventured to come among the disciples. He is called then by name, lest he should despair on account of his denial."

St. Chrysostome⁴ assigns several reasons together,

² Sicut ex mulieribus Mariæ, istis ex viris Petro visus est primo mane. (*S. Ambr. in Evang. Luc. c. 24.*)

³ Hom. 21 in Evang.

⁴ Hom. 38 in 1 Cor. xv. 5. pp. 537, 538, Oxf. Tr. The whole

not only to comfort him after his fall, but for that eminent faith wherewith he first confessed Him to be the CHRIST, and as the "leader of the whole company."

"Why was He not seen of all at the same time? That He might first sow the seeds of faith. For he that saw Him first, and was exactly and fully assured, told it unto the residue: then their report coming first, placed the hearer in expectation of this great wonder, and made way before for the faith of sight. Therefore neither was He seen by all together, nor in the beginning by more in number, but by one alone first, and him the leader of the whole company, and the most faithful: since indeed there was great need of a most faithful soul to be first to receive this sight. For those who, after others had seen and heard, got a sight by this means, had in their testimony what contributed in no small degree to their own faith, and tended to prepare their mind beforehand; but he who was first counted worthy to see Him, had need, as I before said, of great faith, not to be confounded by a sight so contrary to expectation. Therefore He shows Himself to Peter first. For he that first confessed Him to be CHRIST, was justly also counted worthy first to behold His Resurrection. And not on this account alone doth He appear to him first, but also because he had denied Him, more abundantly to comfort him, and to signify that he is not abandoned, before the rest He vouchsafed him even this sight, and to Him first entrusted His sheep. Therefore also He appeared to the women first. Because this sex was made inferior, therefore both in His Birth and in His Resurrection, this first tastes of His grace."

passage is here given, as conveying S. Chrysostome's meaning better than the extract in Nouet from Rudolph. Vit. Christi. ii. 75.

¹ St. Ambrose joins to the faith of St. Peter, the great love he bore his Master, and the earnest desire he had to see Him. "Peter," says he, "being alone, saw the LORD. For his devotion ever prepared and eager, believed, and so was earnest to collect more abundant tokens for his faith. Now with John, now alone, but ever fervent and diligent; ever either alone or first; not satisfied with having seen what he had seen, he sought to see it anew; and burning with love to seek his Master, he could not be satisfied with the sight. No doubt then that Peter believed, believed because he loved, loved because he believed⁵."

St. Bernard says, that it was one of the effects of the goodness of CHRIST, who willed to vouchsafe this consolation to the tears and sorrow of His disciple, who was deeply grieved for the fault he had committed, the bitter recollection whereof left Him no rest. "He appeared," says he, "to Simon in a spirit of loving-kindness. For, truly, it was a mark of extreme loving-kindness, a condescension worthy of the Lord Jesus, to vouchsafe to show Himself first and specially above all the rest, to him who above the rest was confounded by the consciousness of his guilt in having denied Him, that so 'where sin had most abounded, Grace might yet more abound⁶.'"

Oh how blessed was this first interview between

⁵ Petrus ergo vidit solus Dominum; devotio enim parata, semper et prompta credebatur, et ideo studebat frequentiora fidei signa colligere. Alibi cum Joanne, alibi solus, ubique tamen impiger currit, ubique aut solus, aut primus; non contentus vidisse quæ viderat, repetit intuenda, et querendi Domini amore succensus non satiatur videndo. Non est igitur dubium credidisse Petrum, et credidisse quia dilexit, dilexisse quia credidit. (*S. Ambr. l. x. § 174, 5 in Luc. 24.*)

⁶ In spiritu pietatis apparuit Simoni, quia magna omnino, et vere Domino Jesu digna pietatis dignatio, quod ei quasi singulariter et ante cæteros dignatus est apparere, quem præ cæteris de negatione ejus rea conscientia confundebat, ut ubi

the Master and the disciple! Oh how tender and loving were the Master's words! how health-giving were the warnings which He gave to His disciple! How abundant the consolation, the joy, the confidence of the disciple, and at the same time how great his contrition and confusion for his unfaithfulness. Oh loving Shepherd, how tender art Thou towards Thy sheep! and how should the care Thou takest in bringing them back to the fold when they stray, comfort and fill them with hope, and love, and humility, and sorrow for their faults, and with desire to bring forth the fruits of penitence! "The LORD is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon," which name means the child of obedience. How sweet and pleasant are these words to virtuous souls, and above all to those who profess obedience! "Think we over with devoted hearts, how sweet were such an appearance to the children of obedience in that dread strife, when the soul is constrained to part from the body. We presume not to speak what we know not! yet we may piously imagine something of this sort. Perchance to some CHRIST appeareth thus, and gladdens the soul of the obedient with ineffable exultation, and might comfort him with such words as these: 'Fear not, child of obedience; fear not to see those Hands which have been nailed to the Cross through obedience. Behold My Feet pierced with nails, and My Side opened by the lance'. Remember that I died in obedience, and that if, through frailty, thine obedience hath been imperfect, I will that the fulness of Mine supply what is lacking in thine.'

abundavit delictum, superabundet et gratia. [*S. Bern. serm. 2 de Resur.*]

⁷ Ne timeas, fili obedientiæ, ne timeas intueri manus propter obedientiam cruci affixas. Considera pedes, &c. (*Hom. de duobus discipulis euntibus in Emmaum.*) [*fin. t. ii. p. 681*, formerly attributed to S. Bernard.]

What can be more gladdening at that hour than such consolation? What greater sweetness can be poured into the human heart? Children of obedience, engrave these thoughts in your souls; rejoice and be exceeding glad; for the LORD is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Simon^a."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the joy of St. James-the-less on seeing his risen Master. We may reasonably attribute the favour shown him by our LORD to his eminent sanctity, to that rare gift of prayer which he had received from Heaven, and above all, to the grief he felt at the Death of the SON of GOD, and to the resolution he had made to eat nothing until he was assured of His Resurrection, for which He sighed with such unspeakable earnestness.

For our LORD is wont to measure His consolation to His servants, by the afflictions and troubles they endure for His sake, and by the services they render Him. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you^a;" seek Him with sorrow, He will come unto thee with joy. "Be stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the LORD¹."

Be amazed at the favours which God continually pours upon thee, although thou dost so little for Him. What mightest thou not hope from His goodness, if thou wert more faithful and more liberal to Him?

Be ashamed at thy listlessness, and strive to re-awaken thy fervour in prayer, in Communion, in all thy spiritual exercises, and in the practice of solid virtues. Imitate that holy Apostle, who would re-

^a Quid in illa hora potest esse suavius tali consolatione? Quid imprimi potest humano cordi dulcius? Ponite hæc super corda vestra, filii obedientiæ, gaudete et exultate, quia surrexit Dominus vere, et apparuit Simoni. (*Ibid.*)

^a James iv. 8.

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 58.

ceive no consolation during the Death of the LORD, and who by his abstinence and the fervour of his love, obtained the favour of being one of the first to see Him. "CHRIST" will come unto thee, and show thee His consolations, if thou prepare for Him a worthy mansion within thee. All His glory and beauty is from within, and there He delighteth Himself.

"The inward man He often visiteth; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, familiarity exceeding wonderful. Give therefore admittance unto CHRIST, and deny entrance to all others."

"Thou hast not here an abiding city; and where-soever thou be, thou art a stranger and pilgrim: neither shalt thou ever have rest, unless thou be most inwardly united with CHRIST.

"Why dost thou here gaze about, since this is not the place of thy rest? If thou be risen with thy SAVIOUR, in Heaven ought to be thy home, and all earthly things are to be looked upon, as it were, by the way. All things pass away, and thou together with them. Let thy thought be on the Highest, and thy prayer for mercy directed unto CHRIST without ceasing." "If ye be risen with CHRIST, seek those things which are above, where CHRIST sitteth at the Right Hand of God²."

THIRD POINT.

Consider the different conduct of these two Apostles in the reception and right use they made of the same grace. St. Peter directly imparted it to his brethren, and probably our Lord so ordered him, conformably to what He had said to him before His Passion: "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." St. James, it is thought, spoke not

² L. ii. de Imit. Christi, c. 1.

³ Col. iii. 1, 2.

of it, until after the descent of the Holy Ghost, when he was made Bishop of Jerusalem.

This teaches thee in the first place, that thou must keep secret the favours thou receivest from Heaven, if thou be not obliged by thine office, or by some Divine command, to declare them for thy neighbour's edification.

"My son, it is more profitable for thee, and more safe, to conceal the grace of devotion: not to lift thyself on high, nor to speak much thereof, or to dwell much thereon; but rather to despise thyself, and to fear it, as given to one unworthy of it⁴."

Thou learnest, secondly, that our Lord appeareth often to thy superiors, as to St. Peter, that is to say, He instructeth them, and giveth them much light, that they may communicate it to those under their charge, and consequently thou must hearken to them respectfully, renouncing thine own opinion, all human esteem, and self-complacency.

Thou must herein imitate the Apostles, who in simplicity believed what Saint Peter told them, not jealous of the favour he had received, nor of that shown to the two Disciples who returned from Emmaus, all assured upon his word that Jesus was risen again, because He had appeared to him.

For, as the author of the "Imitation of CHRIST" says, "He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but only desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted.

"He also envieth none, because he affecteth no private good; neither will he rejoice in himself; but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God⁵."

⁴ L. iii. de Imit. Christ. c. 7.

⁵ Qui veram et perfectam charitatem habet, in nulla re seipsum querit. Sed Dei solummodo gloriam in omnibus fieri desiderat. Nulli etiam invidet, quia nullum privatum

"He that hasteth to be rich, and hath an evil eye," i. e. envieth others, "considereth not that poverty shall come upon him," because of his avarice and jealousy, and that so he loses more than he gains⁶.

On the contrary, he who rejoices at his neighbour's happiness, and is well pleased to receive from him the good which God, through his means, giveth him, hath found the way of purchasing at little cost much that he lacketh, and of gaining far greater things by practising humility and charity, which is infinitely more precious than all the other graces he could desire⁷. Oh! LORD JESUS, give me the faith and obedience of Saint Peter, the humility and perseverance of Saint James, and the simplicity and charity of the other Apostles, that I may thereby be made worthy to receive here below Thy frequent visits, and hereafter to have a share in the bliss which all Thy saints enjoy, of seeing Thee eternally in Heaven.

Meditation for the Second Sunday after Easter.

JESUS ACTETH THE PART OF THE GOOD SHEP-
HERD TO HIS DISCIPLES AFTER HIS RESUR-
RECTION.

"I am the Good Shepherd."—John x. 11.

REMARK.

As the SAVIOUR of the world takes the Title of Shepherd, even so hath He all that befits it.

gaudium amat, nec in seipso vult gaudere, sed in Deo super omnia bona optat beatificari. (Lib. i. c. 15. de Imit. Christi.)

⁶ Prov. xxviii. 22.

⁷ "There is that buyeth much for a little and repayeth it sevenfold."—Ecclus. xx. 12.

His sheep are the elect, "whom no man is able to pluck out of His Hand."

His fold is the Church triumphant and militant, wherein He gathereth all His elect together, to the end "there may be but One Fold and One Shepherd."

His pastures are the Holy Scriptures, the Sacraments of the Church, and especially the Holy Eucharist.

His crook is the Cross. Thy Cross, O LORD, is "the staff which comforteth" and defendeth me; and the "rod," which chastiseth me if I stray from Thee².

His Voice is none other than the Word of God, and the secret inspirations by which He calleth us, and draweth us to Himself.

As CHRIST's shepherds clothe themselves with the wool of their sheep, so He "taketh upon Him not the garment only, but even the very nature of man. He is found in fashion as a man³."

All this belongs to Him and to none other; so too is He the One and Only Shepherd¹. Alone by His excellence, which distinguishes Him, not only from self-seeking shepherds and robbers, but even from good shepherds, of whom He is the Chief² and Head. The marks by which He is known, and which are laid down in the Gospel, will form the subject of this meditation. We shall see how tenderly He exerciseth His office after His Resurrection towards the Disciples who are going to Emmaus.

FIRST POINT.

The first mark which distinguishes this Good Shepherd from all others, is comprised in these words; "I know My sheep³." Every good shep-

² Ps. xxii. 4.

³ Phil. ii. 8.

¹ I will set up one Shepherd over them.—Ezek. xxxiv. 23.

² 1 Pet. v. 4.

³ John x. 14.

herd ought to know his sheep, otherwise he could not lead them. Since, then, JESUS CHRIST Alone is wholly and specially Good, the knowledge He hath of them, must be different from the ordinary knowledge that good shepherds have of their flocks.

Others, how perfect soever they be, know their sheep only by their outward appearance. But JESUS discovereth them by their inmost heart, which to Him is perfectly known. "There is no creature that is not manifest in His Sight; all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of Him with Whom we have to do⁴." He seeth the ground of our hearts, He knoweth our vices and our virtues; He pierces into our thoughts and intentions; nought can be hid from His Eyes.

This is a great difference; that which follows is still greater. "As the Father knoweth Me," saith He, "so know I My Sheep⁵." How doth the Eternal Father know His Son? He knoweth Him in two ways, inasmuch as He is God, and inasmuch as He is Man; inasmuch as He is God, His Father so knoweth Him, that by His knowledge He begetteth Him, and communicateth to Him His Life and His Substance; inasmuch as He is Man, He knoweth Him by a loving knowledge, which imparteth to His Holy Humanity ineffable perfections, reaching even to infinity, even to His Personal union with the Word. Now, it is in like proportion, not equally, that this Good Shepherd knoweth His sheep, not with a barren and merely speculative knowledge, but with a knowledge full of love, which produceth wondrous effects. For this cause Saint Augustine calleth them the sheep of His Hands, according to those words of the Royal Prophet; "He is the LORD our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His Hand⁶."

⁴ Heb. iv. 13.

⁵ John x. 14, 15.

⁶ Ps. xcv. 7.

What shepherd hath ever been the maker of his sheep? He may, indeed, buy them, or receive them as a free gift; but to make them with his hands, this he cannot do. JESUS CHRIST Alone is the Maker of His sheep. They are the sheep of His Hand, they are His Work; and as the Eternal Father begetteth the Son by way of knowledge, so the Son formeth His elect by a knowledge fruitful in grace, rich in every blessing. As the knowledge of the Father impresseth on His Son the character of His own Perfect Likeness, whence Saint Paul calleth Him "the express Image of His Person;" so the knowledge which the Son hath of His sheep, impresseth on them an indelible mark, which is the token of their predestination, according to the saying of the Apostle, "The foundation of God," which is the Church⁷, "standeth sure" in the faith, by the perseverance of her children, "having this seal," the loving fore-knowledge of the Word, which, pervading all time, and gathering together all those who, in the course of ages, will be faithful to grace, writeth them in the Book of life, and placeth them among the number of His elect. "The Lord knoweth them that are His⁸."

Whence it follows, that it is a woful evil not to be known of Him, but to hear from His Mouth that terrible reproach, "I know you not." I see nothing in you to approve. I recognize in you no mark of charity, or humility, or patience, or faithfulness in My service. I know you not⁹, whence ye are; "ye are not of My sheep."

Ah! who would not tremble at the words of the

⁷ The "foundation" is more commonly interpreted to be "the decree or predestination of God," or "the Church of the predestinated," i. e. the predestinated themselves. Theodoret, and seemingly S. Chrysostome, understood it of "the faith." [Ed.]

⁸ 2 Tim. ii. 19.

⁹ Luke xiii. 27.

great Saint Augustine? "Thou thinkest thyself a sheep, and perhaps God knoweth thee to be a goat¹." "Who knows," said Saint Bernard, speaking to his brethren, "whether the names of all whom I see be written in the book of life? Did I but know, how would I rejoice!" but, alas! who can tell? The ten virgins in the Gospel thought to go in with the Bridegroom; and yet to five of them He said, "I know you not." O fearful word! exclaims Saint Chrysostome, I would rather be struck with ten thousand thunder-bolts than hear it. Ah! LORD, what would it profit me to be known to the whole world, if unknown to Thee? And how can it harm me to be unknown to all creatures, if I be known to Thee, and have the blessedness myself to know Thee.

SECOND POINT.

The second mark which distinguishes this Good Shepherd from all others, is comprised in these words; "My sheep know Me²." For, as the knowledge He hath of His elect is the Source of their eternal bliss, so their knowledge of Him is a necessary means for attaining thereto. To be saved, it is not absolutely necessary that I should know others; but if I know not JESUS CHRIST the LORD, there is no salvation for me. Oh! Incarnate Wisdom, to know Thee, is to draw from the very Fount of Immortality; for Thou art "the Root" and Fount thereof³. And, verily, no man who hath not been baptized in infancy, can be justified when grown up, nor enter the Church but by faith in JESUS CHRIST, Who is the door. And it is in this sense that He

¹ Ovem te putas, hircum forte te novit Deus.

² John x. 14.

³ To know Thy Power is the root of immortality. *Wisd.* xv. 3.

saith Himself, "I am the Door of the sheep ⁴. By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

But He saith afterwards what this knowledge must be, in these words; "My sheep know Me, even as I know the Father ⁴." How knoweth He Him? Inasmuch as He is God, He knoweth what He hath received from His Father, and He loveth Him with a reciprocal love; but He communicateth nothing to Him, because the Father receiveth nought from any. Inasmuch as He is Man, He knoweth the Infinite Majesty of His Father; and seeing His supreme Excellence, and His exceeding loving-kindness, He doeth His Will in all things, and seeketh on all occasions to advance His honour, and to glorify Him.

Thus the elect, who are the sheep of this "Good Shepherd," know Him, receive Him, love Him, praise Him, and serve Him in life and in death, as He hath served His Father; but for all this, they add nothing to His perfections; and after they have done all He commandeth them, they must say, "We are unprofitable servants ⁶."

Moreover, this loving knowledge of JESUS CHRIST is the most pure token of our predestination, which is so hidden a mystery, that none can know whether he be worthy love or hatred; but still, lest the uncertainty of so important a secret should cause us too much uneasiness, God hath left us some reasonable grounds to hope well of His Mercy, among which the most certain, to my mind, is the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS; not a barren, cold, and rude knowledge, as in most Christians, but stedfast, enlightened, effectual, and as it were, experimental. For if the predestination of the Angels hath been founded

⁴ John x. 9.

⁵ Ib. ver. 14, 15.

⁶ Luke xvii. 10.

upon the respect and homage which they paid Him at the very moment of their creation, with how much greater reason ought we to say, that the predestination of men depends upon the devotion, love, and reverence they bear His Person? His Heart is all love; His Soul desireth to pour out His benefits upon us. How should He then see any touched with an ardent desire to know and love Him, and not honour him with His favour, and load him with His gifts?

O! Divine Shepherd, I cannot doubt Thy love for those who know Thee and love Thee; but I bewail the misery of those who know Thee not. Ah! how few there be who seek Thee with their whole hearts! Men are so curious to know the things of the world; they would know all but Thee. Suffer me not, O LORD, to fall into this blindness; let others give themselves up to other knowledge, and glory in their own understanding! my whole glory is to know Thee, and learn from Thy Words and Thine Example, to despise things temporal, and to desire those which are eternal⁷.

THIRD POINT.

The third mark which distinguishes this "Good Shepherd" from all others, is comprised in these words; "I lay down My Life for My sheep⁸." He hath, indeed, laid It down, in a way peculiar to Himself Alone.

The Apostles and Martyrs could, indeed, die for their sheep; but they could not redeem them by their death. That of JESUS CHRIST Alone could

⁷ Si habeant litteras suas oratores, sibi sapientiam suam philosophi: per Christum discimus agnoscere veritatem, vel in contemptu temporalium, vel in appetitu æternorum bonorum. (*S. Paulinus, ep. 27.*)

⁸ John x. 15.

be the worthy Price of our redemption. The Martyrs who laid down their lives for their sheep, did but lay down a life which they would even otherwise have lost. Wherefore it may be said, that they did but hasten their death, and shorten their life; but JESUS, by reason of the hypostatic union, had no need ever to die, and He only took upon Him a mortal life, that He might lay it down for the salvation of mankind.

The martyrs did not so much for others as for themselves, for they gained thereby an inestimable treasure of grace and glory; and thus their death was more profitable to themselves than to others, to whom it could serve only as an example. But the Death of JESUS CHRIST hath won for us grace and eternal glory, and for Himself nothing which was not His birthright.

Finally, the Martyrs could only lay down a portion of their life for others, for there is no man on earth who is not subject to many faults, and who therefore loseth not many moments of his life. But it is not thus with the Life of CHRIST. There is no one moment, no one action, in the whole course of His mortal Life, which hath not conduced to our salvation. "The ⁹ Good Shepherd gave His life for His sheep: His life for them; His Flesh to them." "He hath ¹ given Himself wholly to us; He was wholly expended for the good of each single soul." The slave is not so much the property of his master, as JESUS CHRIST is ours. For the master hath right only over the outward actions of his slave, but JESUS CHRIST hath kept back nothing; He hath given us all the outward and inward actions of His Life. He

⁹ Bonus Pastor animam suam dedit pro ovibus suis; animam pro illis, carnem illis. (*S. Bern. Sermon. [13] in Cant.*)

¹ Totus siquidem mihi datus, et totus in meos usus expensus. (*S. Bern. S. 3. in Circumcis. Dom.*)

hath devoted, employed, and consumed His whole Self in our service. Ah! who would not be overpowered by such exceeding goodness? The prophet Nathan, wishing to convince David of the wrong he did Uriah, proposed to him the parable of a rich man, who, in order to make a feast for his friends, had taken from a poor man his only lamb, which was so dear to him that it ate of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom. David was moved at this account; in former times, he too had been a good shepherd, even so far as to pursue after the lions which were carrying away his sheep, in order to snatch them from their mouths; and seizing them by the jaws, he killed them on the spot. But, in truth, this is only a shadow of the goodness of JESUS CHRIST, Who hath so often snatched me from the jaws of the infernal lion, and Who hath not only endangered His Life, but hath lost it for my sake.

Dear Shepherd of my soul, may I not compare Thee to that poor man who so dearly loved his lamb? Thou, Who art Lord of all, hast made Thyself poor for my sake! Thou hast ransomed me at the price of Thy Blood; Thou hast brought me up in Thine House—the Church, and together with Thy children, Thine elect, making me eat with them of Thy Bread, and giving me to drink of Thy Cup. I have even had sometimes the honour of lying in Thy Bosom by a loving confidence in Thy mercies. Oh! how safely do I rest within Thine Arms! Where could I find a more loving Shepherd than He, Who giveth His Life for my Ransom, and His Flesh for my Food? In whom have I greater confidence than in Him, Who not only layeth down His Life to save His sheep, but Who goeth in search of them when they stray, and ceaseth not to go up and down after them until He hath found them, and brought them back into His fold?

O, flock of the elect, blessed sheep, who have no greater ambition than to make themselves known to this Good Shepherd by their services and virtues ; nor any study more continual and assiduous than to know Him, love Him, obey His Voice, and follow His guidance ; living sacrifices, who consecrate themselves wholly to the service of Him, Who hath so freely laid down His Life for you ! The reprobate have no shepherd but death², that is to say, the devil, who is the cause of their death ; but your Shepherd is JESUS CHRIST, Who is Life³. What ought ye then to expect from a Shepherd Who is the Life, and cannot die, but a blessed life which shall have no end ? Who would not long to reach with you those fertile pastures of Heaven, there to enjoy the blessedness He is preparing for you ? Your safe abode is Paradise ; your Food the Word ; your exceeding riches Eternity. No fear is there, no satiety, no want⁴. Let us hasten, then, my children, let us hasten to that safer place, to those more fertile fields, to that sweeter pasture⁵. Here below we are never without fear, something is ever wanting to us, and our greatest delights end in disgust and bitterness. Let us hasten to dwell there, where we may dwell with-

² The Hebrew, according to the fulness of the Divine language, has a two-fold meaning, "Death shall feed them" and "shall feed on them." Death, i. e. "the devil through whom is death," shall be their shepherd, but to prey on them, not to tend them. (See Oxf. Psalter.) "But," says S. Aug., "if death is the shepherd of the unbelieving, Life is the Shepherd of the believing. If in hell are the sheep whose shepherd is Death, in heaven are the sheep whose Shepherd is Life." [Ed.]

³ Pastorem habetis vitam. (*S. Aug. in Ps. xlviii. 19.*)

⁴ Tuta habitatio Paradisus, pabulum verbum, opulentia multa nimis æternitas. Nihil ibi formidatur, nihil fastiditur, nihil deficit.

⁵ Festinamus proinde, filii, ad locum tutiorem, ad fertiliorum agrum, ad pastum suaviorem.

out fear, may abound without lack, feast without satiety⁶. The Voice of our "Good Shepherd" calleth us thither. His Death giveth us a right thereto, the knowledge we have of Him conducteth us towards it, and we ought to hope that the knowledge He hath of us, which is the mark of His Own sheep, will give us an entrance therein, that we may possess Him and bless Him for ever.

Meditation for the Third Monday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE TWO DISCIPLES ON
THEIR WAY TO EMMAUS. THEIR WEAKNESS,
AND THE CAUSE OF THEIR WANDERING.

"While they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them."—Luke xxiv. 15.

REMARK.

THERE is some difference between Saint Luke and Saint Mark in their account of His Appearance. For Saint Mark says, that these two disciples "went and told it unto the residue; neither believed they them:" whilst Saint Luke, on the contrary, says, that "returning the same day (which was the very day of the Resurrection) to Jerusalem, distant about sixty furlongs from Emmaus, they found the eleven Apostles assembled together, and those who were with them, who said, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon;" this gave Euthymius reason to think that they were two different Appearances. But S. Augustin considers them as one⁷;

⁶ Festinamus, ut habitemus sine metu, abundemus sine defectu, epulemur sine fastidio.

⁷ De Consens. Evang. c. 25.

and in order to resolve the difficulty, says, that among the Apostles some believed these two disciples, and some believed not; and in truth, Saint Matthew assures us, that even when our LORD appeared to the Apostles in Galilee, upon the mountain where He had appointed to meet them, "seeing Him they worshipped Him, but some doubted."

FIRST POINT.

Consider, as exemplified by the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, the blindness and weakness of him who forsaketh God, in order to seek His consolation in the creature. It may be, that these disciples left Jerusalem from a good motive, in order to avoid the persecution of the Jews; and herein we should imitate them, by avoiding the society of the wicked, and those dangerous occasions which so often make us fall into sin. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth, and is confident"; he throweth himself into it, fearing nothing, and is lost through his rashness.

Again, it has been thought that they separated themselves from the company of the Apostles, who were weeping over their Master's Death, in order to relieve their weariness, and seek relaxation in the country amongst their relations and friends (one of them belonging, as has been supposed, to the village of Emmaus).

And if this be the reason which made them go out into the country, as it lacketh wisdom, so ought we not to follow it. For such an act risked the entire loss of faith, hope, and charity, had not the SON of God speedily succoured them. Of faith, for they had believed neither the holy women, nor the Apostles who had seen the Sepulchre and affirmed

* Prov. xiv. 16.

that He was risen. Of hope, "We trusted," said they, "that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel;" showing thereby that they had almost lost all hope. Of charity, for where faith and hope are so weak, charity cannot be steadfast. It is true, they still loved and revered JESUS, since they spoke of Him, as of "A prophet mighty in deed and word;" but they neither loved Him nor revered Him as they ought, since they spoke not of Him as of their Master and their God, infinitely above all Prophets. As Saint Augustine saith, excellently well, "to the Judge of the Prophets they give the title of His heralds. They speak of Him as strangers, and not as disciples⁹." They should have said, with St. Peter, "Thou art the CHRIST, the SON of the living God¹."

Thence learn how dangerous it is not to cling to God, with generous confidence, when any affliction befalleth us, and to leave off our spiritual exercises and holy practices, in order to seek consolation through creatures.

"Vain and² brief is all human comfort. Blessed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A devout man every where carrieth with him his Comforter, JESUS, and saith unto Him, 'Be Thou present with me, O LORD JESUS, in every place and time. Let this be my consolation, to be cheerfully willing to do without all human comfort. And if Thy consolation be wanting, let Thy Will and just trial of me be unto me as the greatest comfort; for Thou wilt not always be angry, neither wilt Thou threaten for ever³.'

"My son, I am the LORD that giveth strength in

⁹ Prophetarum judici nomen Præconis imponunt; ad alienigenarum verba devenerant.

¹ Matt. xvi. 16.

² *De Imit. Christ.* iii. 16.

³ *Psal.* cviii. 9.

tribulation. Come thou unto Me, when it is not well with thee. This is that, which most of all hindereth Heavenly consolation, that thou art too slow in turning thyself unto prayer. For before thou dost earnestly supplicate Me, thou seekest in the meanwhile many comforts, and refresheth thyself in outward things. And hence it comes to pass that all doth little profit thee, until thou well consider that I am He Who do rescue them that trust in Me; and that out of Me, there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counsel, nor lasting remedy. I am at hand (saith the LORD) to repair all, not only entirely, but also abundantly, and in most plentiful measure. Is there any thing too hard for Me? or am I like unto one that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? stand firmly and with perseverance; take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait (I say) for Me; I will come and heal thee⁴."

SECOND POINT.

Consider, in the second place, as exemplified in these two disciples, the cowardice and impatience of the human heart, which is discouraged, and gives way at the least difficulty, or at the smallest delay which interferes with its desires. Our LORD had foretold them that He should be crucified, and that after three days He would rise again, and that they should have the joy of again seeing Him. "A little while and ye shall not see Me; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me, and your heart shall rejoice⁵."

Three days were no long interval, and yet they could not await the close. Scarcely had the third begun, when their patience failed. They must needs

⁴ Imit. J. C. iii. 31.

⁵ John xvi.

quit the company of the Apostles and go away, perhaps never to return, had not the Good Shepherd led back these stray sheep. If thou ask them wherefore they did this, they will answer thee ; " We trusted that it had been He Who should have redeemed Israel ; and, beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done ; yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre ; and when they found not His Body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of Angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the Sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said ; but Him they saw not ;" wherefore they knew not what they ought to believe, nor what they ought henceforth to hope.

Such likewise is our impatience in what concerns our salvation. We give ourselves up with ardour to the pursuit of things temporal, and the time passeth quickly away ; we are discouraged neither by the toil nor the length of years ; but when perfection is to be attained, and we must apply ourselves to the study of virtue, three days' labour tire and weary us. When we are living in vice, and God urgeth us to forsake it, we would that He should wait for us ; and often life passeth away before we grant Him what He asks ; but when we would obtain some favour of His Goodness, as for example, deliverance from sickness or from some mental suffering ; if He grant it not instantly, we lose patience. For this the prophet Isaiah reproacheth the people. " Woe⁶ unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin, as it were, with a cart rope : " and when ye should turn to God, and draw down His mercies upon you, " say, ' Let Him make speed, and hasten His work, that we may see it, and let the counsel of the Holy One of

⁶ Isa. v. 18, 19.

Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it !” Ye will that He should hasten and help you, and ye yourselves haste not to repent and return to Him.

Rupert, in the same way, reproaches the Jews who crucified the Son of God, and mocking Him, said, “If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe in Him.” “Woe to you,” saith he, “who cry, let Him make haste to fulfil His word. Hath He not risen again the third day, as He had foretold ? Why would ye that He should make still greater haste, saying, ‘If He *be* the king of Israel, let Him *now* come down from the Cross ;’ at the very moment He was lifted up ? Yea, most accursed was your haste’.”

We might say the same thing to the two disciples of CHRIST, who lost the hope of His Resurrection so soon as the third day appeared, without awaiting its close ; but it were better to apply it to ourselves, and so correct those eager desires and that impatience, which are common to us when engaged in God’s service, in our prayers, and in the pursuit of virtue.

He that trusteth in God, and believeth His word, “shall not make haste⁷.” “If He delay” their fulfilment, “Wait for Him, because He will surely come, He will not tarry.” Behold, “his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him,” its peace is lost by his impatience ; but “the just shall live by his faith⁸.” Ye would be perfect, so soon as ye have resolved to be so ; ye would obtain the effect of your desires, so soon as ye have made your first petition

⁷ Qui dicitis : Festinet, vœ vobis. Quid enim ! Numquid non multum festinavit, et cito venit opus Sancti Israël ! Numquid non cito resurrexit, post tres dies ! Quid amplius festinare voluistis, dicendo : si Rex Israël est, descendat nunc de cruce, et credemus ei. Quid tam cito venire voluistis opus ejus ! imo quam nequissima festinatio fuit ! (*Rupert. c. 21.*)

⁸ Isa. xxviii. 16.

⁹ Hab. ii. 3, 4.

to God; ye would be caught up to the third Heaven, like Saint Paul, so soon as ye begin to pray; and if ye succeed not at once, ye quit all, and lose courage. This disorder is a great hindrance to grace; your impatience will be exceeding hurtful to you. "The first man lost immortality by disobedience, because through evil counsel, he hasted to become like unto God¹⁰."

THIRD POINT.

Consider yet a third weakness exemplified in these two Disciples, namely, the weakness of their faith. We must needs say that this defect was great indeed, since it drew upon them so severe a reprimand, as that which they received from the very Mouth of the SON of God Himself, despite the gentleness of this "Good Shepherd" towards His sheep. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ought not CHRIST to have suffered these things, and to enter into His Glory?"

These words point out to us the two rocks which most endanger our perseverance and fidelity in the service of God. "For both, we need to humble ourselves; first, that we do not learn, as we ought, in Holy Scripture," what is contrary to corrupt nature, and so we are wanting in light and strength of mind to dive into the deep mysteries of the Cross. The second is, that "we are not intent, as we ought, to fulfil what we know¹."

Believest thou that none can enter Heaven but by the way of the Cross, that is, by patience, humility,

¹⁰ Mortalitatís invidia in hominem redit, qui, cum illam evadere posset de obedientia, in eandem incurrit, dum ex consilio perverso esse festinat similis Deo. (*Novatian. de Trinit.*)

¹ Gemina nos ipsos humiliandi necessitas incumbit, qui neque in scripturis, quantum oportet, edocti; neque ad implenda quæ novimus, quantum decet, sumus intenti. (*Bedæ.*)

mortification, obedience even unto death, and by self-abnegation in judgment and will? Art thou really persuaded of these truths? dost thou often think of them? Art thou perfectly convinced of them, touched, penetrated, and occupied with them? If thou art not, oh, how little light hast thou! how little faith²! If thou art, wherefore fleest thou sufferings, humiliations, and mortifications; and wherefore bearest thou them so cowardly when they come upon thee? Oh, how faint is thy courage! Oh, how weak and languid thy love! Oh, how much cause thou hast to humble thyself, and be filled with confusion before God!

My SAVIOUR, Thou that art the Wisdom of the Father, and from Whom proceedeth the Holy Ghost, Who is Love, enlighten my mind and strengthen my will; give me a lively faith to submit to Thy teaching, and an ardent love to conform my life thereto. Make me to prize the Cross, make me to love It, make me to bear It after Thee, that after Thee I may enter into the glory which Thou givest to them that follow Thee.

Meditation for the Third Tuesday after Easter.

JESUS JOINETH HIS TWO DISCIPLES, AND,
WALKING WITH THEM, ACTETH THE PART
OF A GOOD SHEPHERD TO THESE TWO STRAY
SHEEP.

“Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them.”
Luke xxiv. 15.

FIRST POINT.

AFTER having, in the preceding Meditation considered the wandering of these two Disciples, contem-

² O fools and slow of heart to believe!

plate to-day the charity of the SON of GOD towards them, and the kindness with which He leadeth them back to their duty.

First; He "draws near" to them, He seeketh them, He cometh Himself to join them. Whence were they coming? From Jerusalem, that is, "the place of peace," according to the interpretation of its name. Whither were they going? To Emmaus, "the city of the despised." They were two stray sheep, who would have lost themselves, had the Good Shepherd forsaken them. But He doth never leave the sinner, not even when going most astray. The sheep walks on, browsing the tender grass, and whilst walking on, it strayeth, thinking only of seeking pasture, forgetting that it is going away from its flock, and from the shepherd. The sinner doth the like by taking his pleasure, and feeding himself upon the vanities of the world; he goeth on, ever following his own passions, forgetting that he is going away from God, and running towards destruction. But, for all this, the goodness of God doth not forsake him; He ever giveth him sufficient grace, and such means as may enable him to return to the Father of salvation.

He doth, indeed, sometimes command that the branches of the tree which Nebuchadnezzar, the type of the sinner, saw in his dream, be cut down, the leaves be shaken off, and the fruit be scattered; but He ever willeth that "the root" be left, that it may shoot forth and bud, and recover its former condition.

He not only forsaketh not the sinner, but He is the first to seek him, and to draw him near to Him. "Ye have not chosen Me," saith He to His Apostles, "but I have chosen you." It is not the Samaritan woman who seeketh her SAVIOUR, but He Who preventeth her and waiteth for her at Jacob's

well. It is not the Magdalene who beginneth her own conversion ; it is the SAVIOUR of the world Who enlighteneth her and draweth her to Himself. It is not these two pilgrims to Emmaus who go to meet the SON of GOD ; it is He Who draweth near to them, and cometh to help them.

O my most sweet SAVIOUR, I fear not lest Thou be the first to forsake me ; my fear is, lest I quit Thee ; and my shame and confusion is, that I so often go away from Thee. I cannot complain that Thy grace hath ever failed me in need ; yet I have but too often fallen short of Thy grace ; and this is the cause of my sorrow, which compels me to fly to Thy mercy, of which I ought never to despair, since it exceeds all the wickedness of my heart. " Well " then is my hope strong in Him, that Thou wilt heal all my infirmities, by Him Who sitteth at Thy Right Hand, and maketh intercession for us ; else should I despair. For many and great are my infirmities ; many they are, and great ; but Thy medicine is mightier." I confess that I am a dry and barren tree, a tree without leaves and without fruits, yea, a tree half-dead ; but Thou hast left me prayer, and prayer is the root of my salvation. Never will I forsake it ; into whatever unfaithfulness I may fall, I will ever hope in Thy goodness ; and until Thou hast granted me the spirit of penitence, and the grace of a true conversion ⁴, I will not cease to cry with

³ Merito in Illo mihi spes valida est, quod sanabis omnes languores meos per Eum qui sedet ad dexteram Tuam, et Te interpellat pro nobis ; alioquin desperarem. Multi enim magni sunt iidem languores mei, multi et magni : sed amplior est medicina Tua. (*S. Aug. Conf. x. 69.*)

⁴ "The first order of salvation is to keep from sin ; the second, not to despair of pardon. For he, by his own act, destroys himself for ever, who, having a merciful Judge, betakes himself not to the remedies of penitence." (*Aug. sent. 200.*)

the Prophet, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions⁵."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the sweetness and condescension with which this Good Shepherd seeks His sheep, that He may bring them back to the fold.

1 He takes the same path as these two disciples, though He could have chosen another, had He so willed, in order to go to Emmaus, where He was to make Himself known. "JESUS drew nigh and went with them."

2 He is not discouraged by their weakness, nor by their want of faith. In spite of it, He joins them and converses familiarly with them, according to the capacity of their minds. Blessed disciples, to have met so good a Master! blessed travellers, to have so sweet a Way-farer as the companion of their journey.

3 He keeps pace with them; He goeth not more slowly, for then He would not have joined them. Neither goeth He quickly, for He would soon have passed them. "He went with them."

This pointeth out to us the efficacy of grace, which consists in a secret fittingness, in a certain relation, in a sweet condescension of God's Spirit, which adjusting itself to the will of man, and opportunely fitting itself to the bent of his heart, gaineth his consent without constraining his free-will. For He must needs accommodate Himself to our weaknesses, and this He doth with wondrous goodness, as was specially manifest after His Resurrection. What gentleness did He not show towards Mary Magdalene, both when comforting her by His Presence, and when

⁵ Ps. li.

moderating her fervour, which, had He not restrained it, might have made her die of joy! What condescension does He not show in His other appearances, both when He permitted the devout women to kiss His Feet, and when He showed Himself in an especial manner to St. Peter, that He might spare him the shame he would have suffered, had He reproached him for his sin in the presence of the rest; and again, when He showed His Wounds to St. Thomas, as he had desired, even going beyond His desire, by making him touch Them? It is thus that this Good Shepherd ruleth His flock, accommodating Himself to the weaknesses of His Sheep, mingling in His guidance gentleness with strength, guiding all things to their end by springs alike mighty and sweet⁶.

Lord of all power and might, Who hast complete dominion over all things, Thou "judgest" us with equity; Thou orderest us with great favour; Thou That mayest use power where Thou wilt:" and I who am nothing and can do nothing, I desire to do all that pleaseth me, to the injury of Thy glory! Thou condescendest to my desires, and I set myself against Thy holy Will! Thou hast compassion on my weakness, and I do resist Thy Power! Is not my presumption then inexcusable? Couldst Thou bear with it, if Thy mercy were not infinite?

THIRD POINT.

Consider the wisdom of this Good Shepherd, and the order He observeth in seeking out His sheep, I mean these two disciples, whose wandering steps He recalls, by disposing them gradually to receive the favour He willeth to show them.

⁶ Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily: and sweetly doth she order all things. (*Wisd.* viii. 1.)

⁷ *Wisd.* xii. 18.

1. He questioneth them at first, and asketh them the subject of their conversation, and the cause of their sadness. "What manner of communications, saith He, are these that ye have one with another as ye walk and are sad?" He is not ignorant thereof, but it is a means He useth that He may comfort them, by giving them the opportunity of opening their hearts to Him, and that He Himself may have the satisfaction of hearing them speak of His Sufferings and Death. For He delighteth greatly in our conversations, when we speak of holy things which may edify our neighbour.

2. He lovingly reproveth them, that they may know themselves and acknowledge their fault; "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken!" This reproof is an effect of His Love, not of His Wrath. His zeal is only against vice; He woundeth but to heal.

3. He instructeth them, and "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself." For "he that followeth after JESUS CHRIST, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

4. He toucheth their hearts, and after having enlightened their minds, and reawakened their faith, He stirreth up their will, and rekindles therein the fervour of love. "Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way?" "It is the special attribute of the WORD," as St. Thomas saith, "to breathe love, and with it to inspire men." His words are words of fire, which consume only our imperfections and faults.

5. After having gained their hearts, being already "nigh unto the village whither they went, He made as though He would have gone further," that so He might excite in them the desire to detain Him and enjoy His Presence. For He willeth that we stay

Him, even when He withdraweth. "Passing by, He willeth to be held; passing away, to be recalled," saith St. Bernard⁸. But, how great soever their longing to possess Him, still greater is His to give Himself wholly to them, as He at length does, by breaking the Bread and giving it to them, according to the opinion of St. Jerome and St. Augustine⁹. For St. Jerome says, "in breaking the Bread, He consecrated the house of Cleophas into a Church;" the latter, that "He made not Himself known to His disciples until the Sacrament of the Bread¹," to show that it is by partaking of the unity of His Body, that we remove all those obstacles which hinder us from knowing and loving Him.

O the depth of the mercy and goodness of CHRIST towards His wandering sheep! Oh! what doth He not do, that He may bring them back to their duty? He taketh the form of a Gardener, that He may plant and quicken faith anew in the heart of Magdalene. He appeareth in the form of a way-farer to these two pilgrims, that He may make them return into the paths of God, and teach them the highway of the Cross. He taketh all forms, and maketh Himself "all things to all men:" "not deceiving, but compassionating; not artfully dissembling, but lovingly commiserating²." Why? That He may comfort them, instruct them, lift them out of the abyss, and save them. How often hast thou proved the tenderness of His love! How much light, instruction, healthful counsel, sweet consolation, and loving help,

⁸ *Præteriens teneri vult; abiens, revocari. (S. Bern. Serm. 74 in Cant.)*

⁹ *In Epitaph. Paulæ, Ep. 108, ad Eustoch. § 8.*

¹ *Usque ad Sacramentum panis. (De consens. Frang. c. 25.)*

² *Non mentiendo, sed compatiendo; non simulantis astu sed commiserantis affectu. (S. Aug. c. 9. de S. Paulo loquens.)*

hast thou not received from Him! What acknowledgment, what thanksgiving hast thou offered Him in return? What hast thou done for His service? What zeal hast thou for His glory, and for the salvation of souls? What value dost thou set upon thine own Soul, which He hath redeemed with His Blood³? What care dost thou take about thine own perfection? Alas! If He is so gracious towards thee, even when thou offendest Him, what would He not do for thee, wert thou more faithful to Him? And if thou receivest so many favours from His goodness, whilst thou art still a pilgrim upon the earth, what mayest thou not hope from it, when in Heaven? and what oughtest thou not to do, in order to enter therein?

Meditation for the Third Wednesday after Easter.

THE DISCIPLES TAKE JESUS FOR A WAYFARER AND A STRANGER.

“Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”—
Luke xxiv. 18.

FIRST POINT.

JESUS appeared to His disciples without their knowing Him. St. Luke gives no other reason, than that “their eyes were holden, that they should not know Him.” St. Mark only says, that “He appeared to them in another Form⁴.” St. Augustine says, that it was a work of the spirit of darkness⁵. St. Thomas

³ *Magna res est anima, quæ Christi sanguine redempta est.* (*S. Bern. ep. 54.*)

⁴ Mark xxvi. 12.

⁵ *De cons. Evang. iii. 25.*

Aquinas says⁶, that it was an effect of the power of the LORD, Who, as "it was in his Power, that He should be seen or no, so it was in His Power, that, on sight of Him, there should be formed in the eyes of the beholders, a Form, glorious or not glorious, or mingled, or of any other appearance." St. Gregory adds, that Jesus "appeared outwardly to the eyes of His disciples, such as He was inwardly in their minds⁷." "For they, in themselves within, both loved and doubted; and to them the Lord without was both present by their side, yet shewed not Who He was. To them, then, speaking of Him, He showed His Presence, doubting of Him, He hid the Form wherein they should know Him. He spake with them; upbraided their hardness of heart; opened to them the mysteries of Scriptures concerning Himself; and yet because in their hearts He was yet a stranger to their faith, made as though He would go further."

Be this as it may, we have cause to be humble, if we will reflect upon ourselves, acknowledging, with confusion of face, that the same thing happeneth often to us through our own fault. Our Lord walketh with us as well as with these way-farers, both as King, as Shepherd, and as Judge: as King, He pointeth out to us the road by His example, and commandeth us to follow Him; as Shepherd, He leadeth us and succoureth us by His merits and by the Help of His Grace, to avoid evil and to do good; as Judge, He seeth in what way we demean ourselves, so as to render to every man the reward or punishment he deserves.

This thought ought to constrain us to deep reverence in the Presence of God, and to watch over our

⁶ *Thom. 3. p. q. 54. art. 1. ad. 3. Vide Cajet. Jentac. 2.*

⁷ *In Evang. ii. Hom. 23.*

conduct, so as to do nothing which may displease Him. But, through our negligence it often happens that we know Him not, or see Him not, because our self-love dazzles us, and hinders us from knowing Him really as He is, that is to say, as Good, as Just, as Bountiful towards us as in truth He is, whether He chasten, or console, or threaten us, or excite and encourage us to follow after perfection. For, as St. Ambrose saith, "the eye strayeth when the affection strayeth¹;" and St. Gregory: "The affection of the heart doth mightily close the eye of the mind²."

"O God¹, Who art the Truth, make me one with Thee, binding me to Thee in everlasting charity." Our own opinions and our own thoughts too often deceive us, and they discern but little. "In Thee is all that I would have and can desire." Happy is he who allows not himself "to be drawn according to the bent and longings of an inordinate inclination, but in all his actions is ordered according to the law of right reason. The more he is united within himself, and becometh inwardly pure and detached from every irregular affection, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour; for that he receiveth intellectual light from above," to know Thee, and humbly to know himself.

This is the grace I ask of Thee, Oh Father of Lights! To know myself, and to know thee. To hate myself and to love Thee². To know myself, that I may hate myself, and to know Thee, that I may love and serve Thee.

SECOND POINT.

JESUS appeareth to His disciples under the form of

¹ Errat oculus, ubi errat affectus.

² Oculum mentis vehementer claudit affectus cordis.

¹ Lib. i. *Imit. Christi*, c. 3.

² Noverim me, noverim te. Oderim me, diligam te.

a Way-farer and a Stranger. But He deceiveth them not; on the contrary, He pointeth out under this outward figure what He is verily in a very special way, and what we ought to be after His Example.

If thou considerest what He is, verily He is a Way-farer, unequalled, incomparable; for He is God and Man together, and herein He is Alone, He hath none like unto Him.

He was Alone as a Pilgrim before His Resurrection; for He was at once both a Way-farer and in His Heavenly Home. He was Alone as a Pilgrim after His Resurrection; for the earth was not the place of His abode, He showed Himself there but by the way; Heaven is the dwelling-place of glory, and the mansion of the blessed. Finally, He is Alone as a Pilgrim in the Holy Sacrament; for He is there not only as the Guide of travellers, who are passing from time to a blessed eternity, but also, as the Provision for their journey, giving them strength to proceed onward.

As for us, if we consider the obligations of our present condition, we must ever have this important truth before our eyes, that we are all strangers and pilgrims here below; that Heaven is the end of our journey, and the earth but a land of exile, a place of passage which we must soon leave. It follows, therefore,

1. That we must not fix our affections on things of earth, because, as Saint Paul saith; "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come".

2. That we must not stop or linger on our road, for time is hurrying us on; "the time is short;" let us, therefore, "labour to enter into that rest," lest death should come upon us unawares⁴.

³ Heb. xiii. 14.

⁴ 1 Cor. vii. 29. Heb. iv. 11.

3. That we must live like men who belong to Heaven and eternity, and not like men of this world, who look only to the present, and think not of the future.

4. Finally, that we must never withdraw ourselves from JESUS CHRIST, neither in affection nor in thought; but ever keep ourselves close to Him, follow Him constantly, and never lose sight of Him, for He is the faithful Companion of our journey, the loving Guide to eternity, the Incomparable Wayfarer; Whose Life, as Saint Gregory Nyssen says, "hath been but a simple and incomprehensible sojourning, which, by the single presence of Life and Light, hath to those 'who sat in darkness and the shadow of death,' dispersed all darkness, and utterly destroyed death⁵."

THIRD POINT.

JESUS goeth with His disciples, and asketh them of what they are speaking, and wherefore they are so sad. "What manner of communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk, and are sad?"

Ah! LORD, why dost Thou ask them? Knowest Thou not full well the subject of their conversation, and the cause of their sadness?

Yea, verily; this question was not needful for Him, but it was useful to them, both for their consolation and instruction: and it will be useful to thee also, if thou heed it.

Of what do these two disciples converse as they pursue their way? Of the Passion of CHRIST. How do they speak of It? with sorrow, which is a token

⁵ *S. Greg. Nyss. Or. i. de Resurrect. t. iii. p. 388.*

of their love! "Blessed⁶, thrice blessed are those pilgrims who speak of Jesus, and of what He hath done! He of Whom they speak will join them ere long, and will make their hearts burn within them."

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. If the heart be full of earthly things, of such only will the mouth speak. If the heart be full of God, the mouth will speak of God Alone. Thus Saint Catherine of Sienna had no greater pleasure than to speak of Divine things, with spiritually enlightened persons; as Saint Antoninus says, she could have spent a hundred days and nights in such conversations, without eating or drinking, or taking any rest⁷. Behold the token of a heart which enjoyeth God and loveth Him. "The heart of the wise" which tasteth Divine things, "teacheth his mouth to speak of God⁸;" for this is the language of the Wise. Examine thine own.

Were the Son of God to appear before thee in the midst of thy conversations, and say to thee: Of what speakest thou? "What manner of communications are these which ye have one with another?" Wouldest thou not blush at thy vain jestings, thy disputings, thy frivolities, thy hastiness, and the many careless words which escape thee?

"What manner of communications are these?" Are these the things whereof thou spakest when thou wert fervent in devotion? How hast thou grown thus remiss?

"What manner of communications are these?"

⁶ O nimium felices qui de Christo ejusque gestis loquuntur! aderit is illis de quo loquuntur, et eorum accendet corda. (*Barradius*, tom. iv. l. viii. c. 16.)

⁷ (*Anton. in ejus vita*, § 18.)

⁸ Prov. xvi. 23.

Where are the good resolutions thou shouldest have made in thy seasons of retirement, in thy prayers, and at thy Communions? Hast thou so soon forgotten them?

"What manner of communications are these?" Are these the words of a Christian, of a religious man, of a citizen of Heaven aspiring after holiness? Of a servant of CHRIST, one "whose tongue" is still red with His Blood."

"What manner of communications are these?" Are they such as thou wouldest desire to have at the hour of death? What wilt thou answer at that last moment, when "for every idle word" which thou hast spoken thou wilt have "to give account? For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned¹." Think earnestly of this, and henceforth be careful to speak oftener of JESUS and with JESUS. "Set² a watch, O LORD, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips. Let not my heart be inclined to any evil thing," unworthy of a soul which professeth to love Thee and serve Thee.

¹ S. Chrys. in S. Matt. Hom. 82. 95, &c.

² Matt. xii. 37.

³ Psal. cxi. 3.

Meditation for the Third Thursday after Easter.

**THE DISCIPLES LEARN FROM THE SON OF GOD
THE HIGH MYSTERY OF THE CROSS, AND THE
ESTEEM DUE TO IT.**

“Ought not CHRIST to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?”—Luke xxiv. 26.

REMARK.

THESE two disciples of the Son of God entertained right sentiments concerning the actions of His Life, avowing that He “was mighty in deed and in word before God and all the people;” but they did not duly estimate His Passion and His Sufferings, since after His Death they lost the hopes they had conceived of the redemption of Israel. “We *hoped* that it was He Who should redeem Israel.”

Wherefore our Lord reproved them with a zeal worthy of His Fatherly Goodness; and in order to undeceive them, He shows them that His Death is the source of His Glory, and that it was needful for Him to suffer the shame of the Cross in order to enter into it. We are all, for the most part, subject to the same weakness. Whilst all things succeed according to our wishes, we have high thoughts of God, and great confidence in His Goodness; but when He placeth us on the Cross and giveth us suffering, we are discouraged, murmur, distrust His Providence: and yet it is then that we ought to have most hope, for thereon dependeth all our well-being, and all the glory which He is preparing for us in Heaven. Of this we should strive to convince ourselves, by the words and example of the Son of God.

FIRST POINT.

Consider, in the first place, what is the Glory which our LORD hath obtained by His Death.

1. His Glory is His Resurrection from the Grave, and the triumph of His Ascension. When Solomon ascended his throne, he passed between the lions which were placed upon the steps: and CHRIST, before He ascended into Heaven, passed through the midst of the Pharisees and High Priests, who, like very lions, "tore him asunder." This it is of which St. John speaks as the Glory of CHRIST, saying, "The HOLY GHOST was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified," that is, He had not as yet ascended into heaven³.

2. His Glory is the knowledge of His Divinity, which hath spread itself over all the nations of the earth, through the merits of His Passion. Glory is due properly and absolutely to God Alone⁴. Hence He is called "The LORD of Glory⁵;" and He is truly such, for He is Very God, and is acknowledged and adored as God throughout the world.

3. His Glory is the exaltation of His Sacred Humanity, which hath been raised far above all the choirs of Angels, who acknowledge and adore Him as the "King of Glory⁶." For not only is He their King and Head, in that He is God, but also in that He is Man, for, as St. Paul affirms, He hath merited by His Humility and Obedience that every nation and "tongue should confess that He is LORD, to the Glory of God the Father⁷."

4. Finally, His Glory is the conversion of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Church, and the

³ John vii. 39.

⁴ 1 Tim. i. 17. "To the only wise God be honour and glory."

⁵ 1 Cor. ii. 8.

⁶ Ps. xxiv. 1.

⁷ Phil. ii. 11.

renewing of the world, whereof He is the meritorious cause by His Death, and the exemplary cause by His Resurrection. And in this sense it is that St. Chrysostome says, "The Resurrection of the Lord hath brought joy again into the world. Glorious as is His Presence, so glowing is His Love. The old man hath passed away; the New is come¹." Thus one explains the following words of the kingly Prophet: "The Lord hath built up Zion, and His Glory shall appear²." "He calleth¹ His Sufferings His glory, because by them He subdues the world. And when He stood in the midst of the band of the Apostles, then did he show Himself in His Glory, that is, in the glorious Marks of His sufferings. For He said to Thomas, 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my Hands.' And Thomas, beholding those Sacred Wounds, exclaimed, 'My LORD, and my God.'"

Do thou likewise, adoring with the deepest reverence the Sacred Heart of Jesus, say to Him with David, "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her, yea, the time is come³. The heathen shall fear Thy Name, O LORD; and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty³. This shall be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be born shall praise the LORD⁴; when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms also, to serve the LORD⁵."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the reasons wherefore the Son of God

¹ Domini resurrectio induxit mundo lætitiā. Quanto fulget in aspectu, tanto fervet in affectu. Vetus homo migravit, novus advenit.

² Ps. cii. 14.

³ Hom. in Ps. ci. in Spuria ap. S. Chrys. t. v. ed. Ben.

⁴ Ps. cii. 14. ⁵ Ver. 16. ⁶ Ver. 19. ⁷ Ver. 23.

must needs suffer death, and thereby enter into His Glory.

First, because His Father had so ordained it from all eternity; and He Himself, in obedience to His Will, had taken upon Himself to redeem the world by the Agony of the Cross. "Of a truth, against Thy Holy Child JESUS, Whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy Hand and Thy Counsel determined before to be done⁶." Not that the Divine Counsel was the cause of the malice of the Jews; but He suffered it, that He might thence draw a greater good, even the salvation of the human race. For, as St. Leo says, "The LORD did not compel these impious men to persecute Him, when He did not repel them; nor by foreknowing what would be, did He constrain that it should be, although He took upon Him a mortal body, that it might be⁷."

Secondly, because the Holy Spirit had foretold it by the Prophets, and He is faithful in His words and in His promises. "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful; He cannot deny Himself⁸." Now, He had foretold "by the mouth of all His Prophets, that CHRIST should suffer" death, as said St. Peter⁹.

And therefore our LORD said to him who drew his sword to defend Him on the night of His Passion: "Put up again thy sword into its place: thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve

⁶ Acts iv. 28.

⁷ Non enim impias furentium manus immisit in se Dominus, sed admisit; nec præsciendo quod faciendum esset, coegit ut fieret, cum tamen ad hoc carnem suscepisset ut fieret.—(S. Leo, *Serm.* 16, *de Pass.*)

⁸ 2 Tim. ii. 13,

⁹ Acts iii. 18.

legions of Angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be¹?"

Thirdly, because even had the Passion of the Son of God not been absolutely necessary for the remission of our sins and the healing of all our wounds, nevertheless it was the most excellent remedy which could be applied to them, and the most suited both to the extremity of our ills, to the greatness of God, and to the exceedingness of His Love. "A proud man is a great misery," says St. Augustine², "but a humble God is a greater mercy. This then was, that the great swelling of our pride might be healed by the greater antidote." Such was JESUS CHRIST: He hath humbled Himself, abased Himself, emptied Himself, even to the Death of the Cross, to cure our pride, and, we may add, our avarice, our disobedience, our intemperance, our injustice, by a contrary remedy, greater even than the ill. It may even be said, that in order to satisfy fully the justice of God there was no other possible remedy, and consequently it was in very truth needful. "Amid the universal ruin of the human race," says St. Leo, "there was but one remedy in the secret counsel of Divine Wisdom which could raise us from our fall, namely, that one of the sons of Adam should be born, untainted by original sin, who might succour the rest both by His Example and His Merits³."

¹ Matt. xxvi. 54.

² *Magna est miseria superbus homo, sed major misericordia humilis Deus; quod factum est ut magnus tumor noster majore contraria medicina sanaretur.*—(Vide *S. Aug.* l. iii. de lib. arbitr. c. 10, et l. de Catech. rudib. c. 4, et in *Psal.* xxxiii. Cono. i.)

³ In totius humani generis strage communi, unum solum erat remedium sub divinæ rationis occulto, quod posset subvenire prostratis, si aliquis filiorum Adam originalis prævaricationis alienus et innocens nasceretur qui cæteris et exemplo prodesset et merito.—(*S. Leo, Serm.* 8, de *Nativ.*)

Admire the goodness of the Son of God, Who hath graciously willed to expose Himself to death for thee; and, when any opportunity of suffering or of toiling in His service offers itself, make use of the preceding motives, to quicken thy courage and zeal. Say within thyself: "God willeth this of me. He hath so ordained it, I must go through it." It is written, "The kingdom of God suffereth violence." "Blessed are the poor;" to live as becometh Christians, we must take up the Cross and suffer persecution. We must then submit to it; otherwise, how shall the Scriptures be fulfilled? If I do no violence to myself, I shall never be free from my passion nor my sinful habits; I shall never be steadfast in virtue; I shall never be free from trouble: it is a needful remedy. It must be taken, I cannot dispense with it. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

THIRD POINT.

In order to be more fully convinced, consider the connexion between these two contrary extremes: Glory and the Cross, life and death, suffering and joy. Understand clearly this twofold necessity; the necessity of the end, and the necessity of the means.

We must be saved, whatever it may cost: behold the necessity of the end. In order to be saved, we must suffer: behold the necessity of the means; both are indispensable. The Son of God, Who was without sin, was not exempt from Suffering; how should the sinner then be dispensed? Should the servant be treated better than the Master? If the Master must needs suffer, that He might enter into His glory, shall not the servant suffer, that He may enter into the glory of his Master? "Ought not CHRIST to have suffered all these things?" Wherefore? but to teach us what path we must follow, in

order to attain to glory. "He hath suffered, died, and is risen again; shewing us by His Passion, what to suffer for the truth, and, by His Resurrection, what to hope for in eternity⁴." "Thou knewest what it is to suffer and to die; full of these two is this land of the shadow of death. This thou knewest not, what it was to rise again and to ascend into Heaven. This it is, which JESUS CHRIST sheweth thee. Suffer what He hath suffered, hope for what He hath shewn⁵." What hath He suffered? Poverty, contempt, torments, and Death itself. What hath He shown thee? Heaven.

Thinkest thou to enter Heaven by a different road? "We see Him, Who is our Head, enter, through trouble and sufferings; and we, who are His members, dream we of other roads, according to our wayward will⁶?" O vain thought! "Not without suffering did CHRIST enter into His own Glory. Fools, if we think without tribulation to enter into Another's⁷!" "Imitate, then, thou also, if thou art wise, the wisdom of the Spouse; lay CHRIST crucified with His Sufferings and His Shame, like a precious bundle of myrrh, between thy breasts; ever retain Him there; suffer Him not to be taken from thee, no, not for an hour⁸." "Be the Blood of CHRIST's

⁴ Passus et mortuus est, et resurrexit; passione ostendens quid sustinere pro veritate; resurrectione quid sperare in aeternitate debeamus.

⁵ Pati et mori noveras; plena est his duobus regio mortalium. Illud non noveras, resurgere et ascendere in cælum; hoc tibi Christus ostendit. Patere quod suscepit, spera quod ostendit.—(*Idem*, *Serm.* 107. *Vide eundem in Psal.* lxx.)

⁶ Caput nostrum per passiones et angustias cælum introire videmus; et nos membra ejus alia itinera somniamus?—(*Ludolph. hic.*)

⁷ Fatui sunt qui sine tribulationibus præsumunt intrare in gloriam alienam, cum Christus sine his non intraverit in gloriam suam.—(*Ibidem.*)

⁸ Tu quoque, si sapis, imitaberis sponsæ prudentiam, atque

Passion to thee, the key wherewith thou mayest unlock the gates of Heaven¹."

Meditation for the Third Friday after Easter.

THE DISCIPLES EARNESTLY ENTREAT THE SON
OF GOD TO ABIDE WITH THEM, AND CON-
STRAIN HIM TO GO NO FURTHER.

"Abide with us ; for it is towards evening, and the day is far
spent."—Luke xxiv. 29.

REMARK.

THIS entreaty preceded the great desire which our LORD awakened within them, by making as though He would have gone further, in order that they might entreat Him earnestly to tarry with them. Upon which words, St. Thomas Aquinas¹, following St. Augustine², remarks, that when we make as though we would do something which we do not mean to do, it is a lie in act though not in word ; but that, when we make as though we would do something which we do not mean to do, in order to signify another thing, it is not a lie, but a figure of the truth. He thus explains what St. Luke says ; that our LORD "made as though He would have gone further," although He would not do so, in order to signify thereby, that He was far removed from them through

hunc myrrhæ tam carum fasciculum de principatu tui pectoris nec ad horam patieris avelli.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 43, in Cant.*)

¹ Sit tibi clavis reserationis coeli sanguis Passionis Christi.
—(*Petrus Cellensis, de Pœnit. cap. 15.*)

² S. Thomas, 2. 2. qu. 111, art. 1. ad 1.

³ Quæstt. Evang. ii. 51, 1.

the weakness of their faith. It might also be said, that our LORD would indeed have gone further, had they not entreated Him. "He wished," says St. Bernard³, "to hear that loving prayer; Lord, abide with us, for it is towards evening." [Of old times⁴ also, the Western] Church, knowing how well-pleasing it is to Him, repeated it often from Easter until Ascension-Day. We shall learn, in this Meditation, how we, following her example, ought to make use of it.

FIRST POINT.

We ought, in the first place, to use it when we are in affliction, and entreat our LORD to abide with us, lest we fall into impatience, or murmuring, or faint-heartedness, or discouragement. "Woe to the adversities of the world," says St. Augustine, "once and again, and the third time, for the longing for prosperity, and because adversity itself is a hard thing, and lest it shatter endurance⁵." "Woe to the prosperities of the world, once and again, through the fear of adversity, and the corruption of joy⁶!" Still it is easier to bless God in prosperity than in adversity: the sinner doth so as well as the godly⁷. But when he is in affliction, he very soon loseth

³ Volebat audire: Mane nobiscum, Domine, quoniam advesperascit.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 74, in Cant.*)

⁴ "Abide with us, Lord; Alleluia.

For it is towards evening. Alleluia."

are used as verses and responses at Nones and Vespers from Low-Sunday to the Ascension. They occur in S. Gregory.—[*Ed.*]

⁵ Vae adversitatibus seculi, semel et iterum, et tertio a desiderio prosperitatis, et quia ipsa adversitas dura est, et ne frangat tolerantiam.—(*S. Aug. Conf. x. 27.*)

⁶ Vae prosperitatibus seculi semel et iterum a timore adversitatis, et a corruptione lætitiæ.—(*Ib.*)

⁷ Confitebitur tibi, cum benefeceris ei.—(*Psal. xlviii. 9. Vulg.*)

patience. It belongeth to the just and virtuous alone to say, with the Prophet: "I will bless the LORD at all times⁸;" whether He afflict or comfort me, whether He chasten me, or pour His benefits upon me, His praise shall ever be in my mouth. "Bless the LORD thy God alway⁹," was the advice that the father of young Tobias gave to his dear son.

But as this is a special grace, which God bestoweth on those that love Him, thou must ask it of Him fervently, and say often to Him, Abide with us, LORD, for Thou art a place to hide me in. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble: Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance¹."

SECOND POINT.

We ought, in the second place, to use it when devotion faileth us, or when God withdraweth His consolations, and hideth His light from us, which happeneth often and in divers ways to spiritual persons, who are aiming at perfection. Sometimes He seemeth to forget them, because He leaveth them without any light, and without any feeling of piety in their exercises of devotion; at other times, He seemeth not to hear them, because He granteth not their prayers as quickly as they would; or again, He seemeth to be angry, and holding in His hand a rod, that He may make them afraid; at other times He offereth them crosses heavy to bear, which it sufficeth Him to lay before them, not forcing them to take them up, but only to try their courage². On all these occasions, we must say to Him; "LORD, go not far from us;" for there is danger, lest, deprived of Divine consolations, we should seek relaxation from human com-

⁸ Ps. xxxiv. 1.

⁹ Tobit iv. 19.

¹ Ps. xxxii. 7.

² "Qui fingit laborem in præcepto," Ps. xvi. 20. Vulg. ["Who deviseth trouble (mischief) by a law," E. V. The Hebrew admits both, yet not the stress laid on *fingit* by Nouet. The construction is easiest, as in the E. V.—Ed.]

fort, amid the vanities, diversions, and pleasures of the world. "It is no hard matter to despise human comfort, when we have Divine. It is much, very much to be able to want both human and Divine comfort; and, for God's honour, to be willing cheerfully to endure banishment of heart; to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if at the coming of Grace thou be cheerful and devout? this hour is wished for of all men. He rideth easily enough whom the Grace of God carrieth³." "Did not our heart burn within us," said these two disciples, "whilst He talked with us by the way, and whilst He opened to us the Scriptures⁴?" "But none can always enjoy these Divine comforts according to his desire;" for it is a gift of God, which He withdraweth and giveth when it pleaseth Him. "But false freedom of mind, and great confidence in ourselves, is very contrary to heavenly visitations. He that desireth to keep the Grace of God, let him be thankful for grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof: let him pray that it may return; cautious and humble, lest he lose it⁵." But in whatever state he is, he ought ever to say with the disciples: "Lord, abide with us." "If I be left to myself, behold I become nothing but mere weakness: but if Thou for an instant look upon me, I am forthwith made strong, and am filled with new joy. And a great marvel it is, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by Thee, who of my own weight am always sinking downward! Blessed be Thou, my God; for, although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet Thy rich bounty

³ l. ii. de Imit. Christ. c. ix.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 32.

⁵ Qui gratiam devotionis retinere desiderat, sit gratus pro data, patiens pro sublata, oret ut redeat, cautus sit et humilis, ne amittat.—(L. ii. de Imit. c. 10.)

and Infinite Goodness never ceaseth to do good even to the ungrateful, and to those who are turned away far from Thee." "LORD, abide with us," that we may indeed be thankful, humble, and devout⁶; for Thou Alone art our Strength, our Light, our Guide, our Way, and our End, the Beginning, the Middle, and the End of our journey."

THIRD POINT.

We ought, in the third place, to use it in our old age, and in sicknesses, which are messengers of death. Then it is that we most need the help of CHRIST, because our day being far spent, we have less strength to resist our enemies, who at that time redouble their efforts against us, well knowing that this last conflict will decide the victory. In the words of Scripture, our life is but a day! "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day," that is, whilst I am alive⁷. True it is, that there is no hour of the day, nor portion of our life, exempt from temptation; and consequently we must at all times say, "LORD, abide with us." For this reason St. Paul said to the Hebrews, "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin⁸." But it is also true, that we never are more in danger of being lost, than when "the day is far spent;" that is to say, at the close of our life; because, as St. Bernard says, "the devil layeth his snares against perseverance alone, because he knoweth that it alone will be crowned⁹."

Then, therefore, especially we must say, "LORD, abide with us; for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent." "Cast me not away in the time of

⁶ Id. l. iii. c. 8.⁷ John ix. 4.⁸ Heb. iii. 13.⁹ Soli perseverantiæ insidiatur diabolus, quam solam novit coronari.—(S. Bern. ep. 32.)

age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me¹." "Go not far from me, O God; my God, forsake me not in mine old age, when I am grey-headed²." This was the prayer of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who, feeling himself beset with temptations in his latter years, said lovingly to our LORD, "Most gracious God, guard, I beseech Thee, mine old age and these hoar hairs, and grant me a blessed close of life." This was St. Augustine's also; "O LORD our God, in the shadow of Thy Wings let us hope; protect us, and carry us. Thou wilt carry us when little; and even to hoar hairs wilt Thou carry us; for our firmness, when it is Thine, then is it firmness; but when our own, it is infirmity³."

FOURTH POINT.

In the last place, we ought to remember that the world is drawing towards its close, and is, so to say, in its extreme old age; and that "the nearer the end of the world approaches, so much the more will errors, iniquity, and infidelity increase⁴." "It hath been foretold," says St. Cyprian⁵, "that as the world waneth, all good shall wane, things evil and adverse wax." Our LORD hath told us beforehand, that in the latter days the "love of many will wax cold," and that at His Last Coming He will scarce "find faith upon the earth." It is, then, in this sad

¹ Ps. lxx. 10.² Ibid. 13, 19.³ O Domine Deus noster, in velamento alarum tuarum speremus; et protege nos, et porta nos. Tu portabis et parvulos, et usque ad canos tu portabis; quoniam firmitas nostra, quando tua est, tunc est firmitas; cum autem nostra est, infirmitas est.—(*S. Aug. Conf. iv. fin.*)⁴ Quantum accedit finis mundi, crescunt errores, crescit iniquitas, crescit infidelitas.—(*S. Aug. Tract. 25 in Joan.*)⁵ Prædictum est, deficiente mundo, bona quæque deficere, mala vero et adversa proficere.—(*S. Cypr. Ep. 67, § 17.*)

time, more than in any other, that we ought to say,
 "Abide with us, LORD."

"Remember we are Thine ;
 All fall'n and frail, yet Thine our frame ;
 The glory, LORD, of Thy Great Name
 To other ne'er resign ⁶."

LORD, "abide with us ; for the godly man ceaseth, the faithful faileth from among the children of men ⁷."
 "The Sun of Righteousness being upon the decline at the world's even-tide, the night of faithlessness bespreadeth all, the light of truth faileth. Lest we too fail with those who fail, abide with us, for it is towards evening ⁸."

"Already have the waters of affliction come even into our souls ; already are the sweetnesses of devotion, the foretastes of Heaven's delights, changed into desolation ; already are all the corners of our souls shaken with the winds of temptation. Abide with us, for it is towards evening ⁹."

"The evening of my life is already at hand, a grievous sickness consumeth my body, bitter death already threateneth, fear and terror lay hold of my whole conscience, as it hears the terrible sentence of judgment. But Thou, LORD, to Whom the "Father hath committed all judgment," "abide with us, for it is towards evening ¹."

⁶ Memento quod sumus Tui, licet caduci plasmatis ; Ne des honorem Nominis Tui, precamur, alteri.—(*Hymn at Matins in Lent. Rom. Brev.*)

⁷ Psalm xii. 1.

⁸ Vergente mundi vespere Sole justitiæ, omnes occupat nox perfidiæ, lux veritatis deficit ; ne deficiamus cum deficientibus, mane nobiscum, quoniam adeesperavit.—(*Hom. de duobus discip. euntibus in Emmaunt. ap. S. Bern. t. ii. p. 678.*)

⁹ Jam veniunt aquæ usque ad animam, jam devotionis deliciæ vertuntur in miseriam, jam omnes angulos mentis ventus tentationis concutit. Mane nobiscum, quoniam advesperavit.—(*Ibid.*)

¹ Vitæ mææ jam instat vespera, corpus consumit ægritudo

Meditation for the Third Saturday after Easter.

THE DISCIPLES KNOW CHRIST IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD.

“He went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He vanished out of their sight.”—Luke xxiv. 29—31.

FIRST POINT.

CONSIDER the extreme graciousness with which our LORD entered the house of His Disciples, and sat down to meat with them. It is thus He dealeth with us in the Communion, in prayer, and in all our actions. For, since He Himself saith, “without Me ye can do nothing²,” it is needful that He take part in all we do, in order that we may do it well. It is needful, if we may so speak, that He go in with us, that He go out with us, that He walk with us, that He speak with us; that is to say, in a word, that He lend His Aid and His Help in all our actions; and this He ever doth most lovingly on His part, though all know not how to profit by it equally. Some look to Him with love, and revere His Presence, prize what He doth in them, and strive to correspond faithfully thereto; others reflect not upon It, neither do they pay Him the reverence they ought; others do still worse, for they often mar His

pergravis, jam mors minatur aspera; timor et tremor totam conscientiam occupat, terribilem sententiam judicii pertimescit; sed tu, Domine, cui Pater omne judicium dedit, mane nobiscum quoniam advesperascit.—(*Ibid. ubi pl.*)

² John xv. 5.

work, and hinder Him from doing what He willeth to do for their good. See of which number thou art. Art thou careful to live in His Presence? Doth He accompany thee in the society thou frequentest? Is He with thee when thou workest, or when thou retest, or when thou art about any business? Canst thou say, with the Wise man, "After I am come into mine house, I will repose myself with the Incarnate Wisdom: for her conversation hath no bitterness; and to live with Her hath no sorrow, but mirth and joy³:" or with Job; "O that One would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that He that is to judge me had written a book" (wherein to prescribe all mine acts), "surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me⁴." Wherever I go I would read it, and "I would declare unto Him the number of my steps; as a Prince would I go near unto Him," to offer Him all I do. Dost thou thus? Pray Him to abide with thee, both in "fellowship" and in might: in fellowship, that thou mayest do nothing without Him; in might, that so thou mayest do nothing but through Him. "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shalt not stumble; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet;" for the LORD shall be with thee, and bless thy work⁵.

SECOND POINT.

Consider how our LORD made Himself known in breaking bread, and giving it to His Disciples: "He was known of them in breaking of Bread."

"Breaking of Bread," in Scripture, has three meanings, containing three excellent means of growing in the knowledge and in the love of Jesus CHRIST.

³ Wisd. viii. 10.⁴ Job xxxi. 35—37.⁵ Prov. iii.

First; it signifies almsgiving, and all works of mercy, both spiritual and corporeal, which we exercise towards our neighbour. "Deal (*or break*) thy bread to the hungry," saith Isaiah⁶, "and satisfy the afflicted soul." This is the way to know CHRIST, and to receive His gifts to thy soul's health, according to St. Paulinus; "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and thou wilt attain to CHRIST," i. e. shake off the sleep of carnal listlessness, and lift up the soul, bowed down by earthly thoughts, from dead cares, i. e. carnal conversation, lifting up and directing thy soul to the LORD. And thou shalt attain to CHRIST. "Dealing after His commands, in every needy thou shalt see Him, and in every poor man thou shalt touch Him⁷. And, as St. Augustine saith, also; "Stay the stranger, if thou wouldest know the SAVIOUR. Hospitality restored, what infidelity had taken away⁸." "The LORD made Himself known to them in 'breaking of bread.' Learn, then, where CHRIST must be sought, learn where He may be found, learn where He may be known." In "breaking bread" we know the LORD⁹.

Secondly; "breaking of bread" signifieth the word of God, which is distributed to the children of the Church. "The little ones asked for bread, and there was none to break," or give "it them¹¹!" If thou wouldest grow in the knowledge and love of JESUS CHRIST, imitate these two disciples, who lis-

⁶ Isai. lviii.

⁷ Videbis Eum in omni egeno, et tanges Eum in omni paupere.—(*S. Paulin. Ep. 32, ad Sever. § 20.*)

⁸ Tene hospitem, si vis agnoscere Salvatorem. Quod tulerat infidelitas, reddidit hospitalitas.—(*S. Aug. Serm. 235.*)

⁹ Dominus præsentavit se ipsum in fractione panis. Discite ergo ubi Dominum quaeratis, discite ubi habeatis, discite ubi agnoscatis quando manducatis. [Panem frangimus, et Dominum cognoscimus].—(*Ibid.*)

¹¹ Lam. iv.

tened with holy eagerness to the words of the LORD, as He explained to them the Mystery of the Cross. He was, indeed, the Pillar in the wilderness, which was leading them on their way. The Pillar of fire burns inwardly in their hearts, because outwardly the Pillar of Cloud spoke unto them Himself, namely, in the form of a stranger, which as a cloud covered him¹.

In the third place, "breaking of bread" signifies the Holy Communion. "They continued stedfast," says St. Luke, speaking of the first Christians, "in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in prayers²." They truly know their LORD in the "breaking of Bread," whose heart within them so vehemently burneth, whilst Thou, O blessed JESU, dost walk and converse with them³. "Hungering and thirsting, as they are, for this Bread of Heaven, they with the mouth of their hearts and bodies alike, from their inmost vitals pant after Thee, O God the Fountain of Life, not being otherwise able to allay or satisfy their hunger, but by receiving Thy Body with all delight and spiritual eagerness. O truly burning faith of those persons, truly does it attest the Presence of Christ in His Holy Mystery. Be Thou favourable unto me, O merciful JESU! sweet and gracious Lord; such desire and devotion as this, love and fervency so vehement, are too often far from me! grant to me Thy poor needy creature, sometimes at least in this Holy Communion to feel if it be but a small portion of Thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may become more strong, my hope in Thy Goodness may be increased, and that charity once perfectly in-

¹ Ardebat nimirum intus columna ignis, quia foris columna nubis loquebatur ad eos.—(*Drogo de Sacram. Dom. Pass.*)

² Acts ii. 42.

³ De Imit. Christ. iv. cap. 14.

flamed, after the tasting of Heavenly Manna, may never decay ⁵.

THIRD POINT.

Consider why Jesus, having manifested Himself to His disciples, immediately disappeared from before them. It was, as Euthymius ⁶ says, that "they might return to the Apostles without delay, because He wished to shew Himself that same day to them all." And this they at once did, as the Evangelist witnesses, saying, "they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem." Blessed return from error ⁷, teaching us to execute without delay the good desires with which our Lord inspireth us, to correct our faults and practise virtues. Observe herein two mighty effects of the visits of Jesus. The first is a holy ardour and inclination for good. "Whilst I was thus musing, the fire kindled ⁸:" are thy meditations attended with fervour? For words and reasonings must ever be mingled with affections and liftings up of the mind. "O fire which ever burnest, kindle me ⁹." "My heart is ready, O LORD, my heart is ready." The second is a speedy execution of the good desires thou hast conceived. I shall know when Thou comest unto me, by the change Thou wilt work in my soul, and by the good effects Thou wilt bring forth therein: for then "shall I have understanding ¹⁰," and go forward "in the ways of godliness;" "I will walk in my house with a perfect heart. I will take no wicked thing in hand; the sins of unfaithfulness, there shall no such cleave unto

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ad loc.

⁷ Surgentes regressi sunt eadem hora in Jerusalem. Ecce pulchra ab errore reversio.—(*Anastas. Sin. Hexaem. x. v. fin.*)

⁸ Ps. xxxix. 3.

⁹ O ignis, qui semper ardes, accende me.

¹⁰ Ps. ci. 2.

me;" "a froward hearted person shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked person."

Dost thou make this use of them? If God giveth thee, in prayer and communion, earnest desires to mortify thyself, to humble thyself, to bear with the ill humour of others, and to exercise patience and charity, art thou careful to execute them that very day and upon the first opportunity? Dost thou never allow this holy fervour to grow cold? Didst thou not protest before God that thou wouldest be more collected during the day, and more heedful of His Divine Presence? Whence then cometh this dissipation of mind, this forgetfulness of God, and this loss of time? Where is that heavenly fire which the Holy Ghost once kindled in thy heart? How has it been quenched? Be, henceforth, more careful to preserve it. Entreat forgiveness of the Son of God for thy carelessness; say to Him, with David¹: "Thy word is tried with the fire, therefore Thy servant loveth it." Grant that it may ever burn, and that its flame increasing more and more, may kindle others also and draw them to Thy love.

¹ Ps. cxix. 140.

Meditation for the Fourth Sunday in [Third after] Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE APOSTLES ON THE
EVENING OF THE DAY OF HIS RESURREC-
TION AND FILLETH THEM WITH JOY.

“Then were the disciples glad when they saw the LORD.”—
John xx. 20.

“Ye now therefore have sorrow : but I will see you again,
and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh
from you.”—John xvi. 22.

REMARK.

By showing Himself to the Apostles on the very Day of His Resurrection, and by filling them with joy, Jesus fully accomplished the promise which He had made the evening before His Death, that though in a little while they would be deprived of His Presence, yet that in a little while also they should see Him again, and their hearts should rejoice.

“A little while,” He telleth them in the Gospel of to-day, “and ye shall not see Me ; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me, and because I go to the Father :” and further on, “ye now therefore have sorrow ; but I will see you again, and the heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” St. Augustine understands by the words “a little while,” the time of the Son of God’s absence, from His Ascension until His Last Coming, because this period is but a moment when compared with the Eternity during which the blessed shall see

Him. The common interpretation applies these words to the three days of His Death, after which He appeared to His disciples, before He ascended into Heaven and went unto His Father, filling them with joy by His Presence. These two explanations together, give us reason to say, that this life is but a moment of joy and of sorrow, which the righteous and the sinner share oppositely; for whilst the portion of the wicked is a moment of joy and an eternal woe; that of the just is a moment of sorrow and an eternal joy: this forms the subject of the following Meditation.

FIRST POINT.

For one moment of joy an eternal woe; such is the portion of the ungodly. "The world shall rejoice, but ye shall be sorrowful:" ye shall see the wicked rejoicing, living in honour, in pleasure, and in the abundance of riches; but envy not their lot. Their joy hath grievous defects and evil qualities which should fill them with contempt for it.

It is vain, because they rejoice only in what is vile and contemptible, and in the end, find in the things they love, nothing but vanity, deceit, and lies.

It is never full and perfect, being ever mingled with some vexation. "Thinkest thou that the men of this world suffer nothing or but a little? Ask even of those who enjoy the greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. Even while they are yet alive, they rest in them, not without bitterness, weariness, and fear; for from the self-same thing in which they imagine their delight to be, oftentimes they receive the penalty of sorrow. But thou wilt say, they have many delights and follow their own will, and therefore they do not much weigh their afflictions. Be it so, that they do have whatsoever

they will, but how long dost thou think it will last³?"

"Vain and brief is every solace of man." "Behold, the wealthy of this world shall consume away like smoke, and there shall be no memory of their past joys⁴. "Be they in themselves not phrenzied, yet be they what they may, one little fever carries off all worldly joys," saith St. Augustine⁵, who speaks of it from experience, often before his conversion; "I marked how it fared with me, and I found it went ill with me, and grieved; and grieving, I doubled that very ill. If any prosperity smiled on me then, I was loath to catch at it; for almost before I could grasp it, it flew away⁶." Hence the restlessness of those who wander through the broad way of this world, never being content, because they find not that they seek in the enjoyment of perishable things; what they seek, is the setting at rest of their desires, and the entire satisfaction of their heart, which, being of infinite capacity, can be filled truly, only by the One Sovereign and Infinite Good. Rest in Him, and ye shall be at rest. "The good that ye love is from Him; but it is good and pleasant only through reference to Him, and justly shall it be embittered," [if out of Him] "because unjustly is any thing loved which is from Him, if He be forsaken for it⁷."

For worldly joy entices to sin, and sin poisons joy, the end whereof can only be misery, since its begin-

³ L. iii. de Imit. Christi, c. 12.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Quamvis insana non sint gaudia, tamen qualiacumque sint, aufert omnia ista vel una febricula.—(*De Catech. rud.* c. 16.)

⁶ Si quid arrisisset prosperum, tædebat arripere, quia pene priusquam teneretur, avolabat.—(*Conf.* vi. 6.)

⁷ Amarum erit juste, quia injuste amatur, deserto illo, quidquid ab illo est.—(*S. Aug. Conf.* iv. 12.)

ning is evil, its foundation decayed, and its research sinful.

But the blindness and intoxication of sinners allows them not to reflect upon this, nor to discern what they are. They know neither how to sorrow nor to joy as they ought; they sorrow at good, and "joy in evil"; and allowing themselves to be carried away by their passions, they purchase the short-lived joys of this miserable life at the price of the eternal death of their soul.

"Thou, then, O Christian soul, follow not thy passions, and renounce thy disorderly desires." Close thy heart against those miserable joys, and, to this end, mortify thy senses, fear God, and love JESUS CHRIST. How canst thou open thine eyes to the things of this world, when thine End is JESUS, the Source of all true joys? How much did beholding the apple cost to Eve, beholding a man cost to Dinah, beholding a woman cost to David!

O fleeting joys of earth! how dear do ye cost the sinner! Their pleasure is but for a moment², and this moment is followed by an eternity of woe¹. "Truly miserable is their condition, when the pleasure swiftly passeth, the torment endlessly endureth. The vehemence of passion passeth away in a moment, the shame of the wretched soul endureth for aye³."

SECOND POINT.

For one moment of sorrow, an eternal joy; this is

² Prov. ii. 14.

³ "The joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment."—Job xx. 5.

¹ "In a moment they go down to the grave."—Ib. xxi. 13.

² Vere nimirum plangenda et miseranda conditio est, ubi cito præterit quod delectat, et permanet sine fine quod cruciat. Sub momento enim libidinis impetus transit, et permanet sine fine infelicia animæ opprobrium.—(Cæsar. de honest. mulier. c. 3. serm. 293. App. S. Aug.)

the portion of the righteous. "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." Fear not to open thy heart to the sadness and groanings which the HOLY SPIRIT worketh therein. This sadness is better than worldly joy. God exerciseth those whom He loves, in this life; and this trial of their virtue seems at the time a cause of sorrow, and not of joy. Grief maketh penitents to groan; toil maketh those who give themselves up to good works to groan; Divine Love maketh the perfect to groan; zeal maketh those who rule and who labour for the salvation of souls, to groan: but, after having exercised them, He maketh them to reap the fruits of righteousness in abundance of peace³.

What is "the fruit of righteousness?" "The fruit of righteousness is peace" and joy of the SPIRIT. "Threefold is the joy of the holy: before death, from the testimony of a good conscience; in death, because they are taken away from this present evil world; after death, because they enter into the joy of their LORD, which no man shall take from them⁴." So that the sorrow of the good man endureth, in very truth, but for a moment; but their joy is everlasting. It accompanieth them every where, in life, in death, and after death; because God, from Whom it springs, is an Infinite Good, comprehending supremely all which can satisfy them; an Immortal Good, Which

³ "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." —Heb. xii. 11.

⁴ *Triplex est gaudium sanctorum: ante mortem, de bono conscientiae testimonio; in morte, quia eripiuntur de presenti seculo nequam; post mortem, quia intrant in gaudium Domini, quod nemo tollet ab eis.*—(S. Bern. *serm.* 2 et 3, *de omnibus Sanctis.*)

cannot fail, and of Which, if they will, no man can rob them.

Happy, then, is he who taketh God for his portion, and who can say with the saints: "Behold my God and my All! What would I more, and what happier thing can I desire? O sweet word! My God and my All! O sweet and savoury word! but to him that loveth the Word; not the world, nor those things that are in the world. My God and my All! Enough is said to him that understandeth; and to him that loveth it is pleasant to repeat it often. For when Thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when Thou art absent, every thing becomes irksome. Thou givest quietness of heart, and much peace and festive joy. Neither can any thing please long without Thee. What is not savoury unto him to whom Thou art pleasing? And whom Thou delightest not, what can be pleasant to him?"

THIRD POINT.

He Who bestoweth this portion upon His servants is JESUS CHRIST, to Whom it belongeth to change all the false joys of this world into bitterness, and all afflictions into true joy.

He doeth it even in this life, in the Most Blessed Sacrament; for Therein He sheweth Himself, and comforteth us by His Presence coming to us when the doors are shut; that is to say, when our senses are gathered up, and our heart closed against all earthly objects⁵. There He maketh us to taste the sweetness of His SPIRIT; and to him who hath "tasted of the SPIRIT, insipid is every thing of the flesh". There He giveth us to drink of that Living

⁵ De Imit. Christi, iii. 34.

⁶ "They were glad when they saw the LORD."

⁷ "Gustato spiritu, desipit omnis caro."—(S. Bern. [ep. 116.])

Water which flows from "the river of Paradise," of which whosoever drinketh, as St. Augustine says⁸, "in him is all thirst for this world quenched." Finally, There He giveth us the Bread of Angels, which is the delight of kings, that is, of those Saints who rule over their passions; filling them with heavenly consolations, and mingling pleasure with their spiritual food, far more than with the nourishment of the body, which God, as the Author of nature, giveth us abundantly, "filling our hearts with food and gladness," as St. Paul saith⁹. Hence the martyr, St. Ignatius¹, said: "I take no delight in, I have no taste for, corruptible food, nor for pleasures of this life; I long for the Bread of God, Which is the Flesh of Christ, of the seed of David; I long for that 'Drink' Which is Blood, Which is undecaying Love."

Our LORD herein dealeth very mercifully with His elect; on the one hand, taking from them the consolations which the world enjoys, lest they should cling to them, and, on the other, giving them back Divine consolations, in order to draw them to Himself, and to shew them, by blessed experience, that He is the "God of all comfort," Who Alone can make them happy², and that, in default of all created goods, as St. Augustine saith, "Jesus Himself willeth to be All their joy³."

But what joy soever He maketh them taste in this life, it must be confessed that it is but a drop of

⁸ Qui de fluvio Paradisi bibit, in eo sitis hujus mundi extinguatur.

⁹ Acts xiv. 17.

¹ Ep. ad Rom. § 7.

² "Thou, O LORD, wert ever with me mercifully rigorous, and besprinkling with most bitter alloy all my unlawful pleasures: that I might seek pleasures without alloy; and that, where to find such, I should not discover, save in Thee, O LORD."—(*S. Aug. Conf. ii. 2.*)

³ Gaudium ipsorum est Ipse JESUS.—(*Tract 101, in Joan. § 3.*)

water, in comparison of that overflowing river which rejoiceth the blessed in the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Oh, what joy to see the SON of GOD in His Glory !
 Alas ! O Lord, "when⁴ will that blessed and desired hour come, that Thou mayest satisfy us with Thy Presence, and, as Thine Apostle saith, Thou mayest be unto us All in all ? As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Still, alas ! the old man doth live in me ; he is not wholly crucified, is not perfectly dead. Still doth he mightily strive against the SPIRIT, and stirreth up inward wars, and suffereth not the kingdom of my soul to be in peace. But Thou that rulest the power of the sea, and stillest the rising of the waves thereof, arise and help me !" Purify, rejoice, enlighten, and enliven my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto Thee with abundance of joy and triumph.

Meditation for the fourth Monday after Easter.

**JESUS APPEARETH TO THE APOSTLES, AND
 SAITH UNTO THEM, "PEACE BE UNTO YOU."**

"Peace be unto you ; it is I, why are ye troubled !" —
 Luke xxiv. 36. 39. 38.

FIRST REMARK.

BOTH St. John and St. Luke relate this Appearance ; but, as each omits some circumstances which the other notices, we will join them all together. St. Luke remarks, that the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, having known our LORD in the

⁴ De Imit. Christi, iii. 34.

breaking of bread, rose up that same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven Apostles gathered together, and them that were with them, who said, "The LORD is risen indeed; and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread. And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you! Why are ye troubled? It is I Myself."

St. John adds, that it was the very day of the Resurrection, which was the first day of the week, and that coming, when it was evening, into the place where they were assembled, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews, He stood in the midst of them, and said to them twice, "Peace be unto you."

SECOND REMARK.

It may be asked how, what St. Luke says, that the two disciples "found the eleven Apostles assembled," agrees with what St. John affirms, namely, that St. Thomas "was not there when Jesus appeared to them." We answer, that he was there when the two disciples arrived, but that giving no credence to their words, he went out from among them, before our LORD had come; or, it may be, that St. Luke takes the greater number for the whole; in the same way as St. John, when speaking of St. Thomas, says, that "he was one of the twelve Apostles," although Judas being already dead, there were then but eleven.

It may also be asked, why our LORD entered the place wherein they were assembled, in so marvellous a way, without opening the doors, and without warning them of His approach. The reply is, that He willed thereby to shew them the condition of glorified bodies, to whom the thickest walls are no hindrance,

and to give them some tokens of His Divinity, to Which all things are possible⁵.

FIRST POINT.

Consider the excellence of peace in itself, and the better to know the value of so precious a gift ;

Observe, in the first place, that, speaking generally, peace is none other than a perfect union, harmony, and secret agreement of all the appetitive powers of the soul, which takes place in two ways ; first, when our will united itself with that of others, according to what St. Paul⁶ says ; "as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Hence St. Augustine⁷ says, that "the mind which feedeth on discord and contests, cannot enjoy the health of peace."

The second is, when, besides this sweet unison of heart with others, there is a harmony and union of the reasonable with the sensitive appetite, or of the different emotions of the same power in the same man. For our peace is lost in these two ways, either when the superior appetite is not in harmony with the inferior, and both aim at contrary objects ; or, when one and the same power of our soul inclines to things which are incompatible, and which it cannot have at the same time, as when a sensual man loves his pleasure to excess, yet still fears to ruin his health. For, in this case, he is tossed about and torn by different emotions of his sensitive appetite.

Observe, in the second place, that these appetitive faculties, the perfect union whereof constitutes the

⁵ Christus clausis foribus ingreditur et egreditur, talique indicio se totius creaturæ demonstrat auctorem.—(*S. Chrysost. Serm. 84.*)

⁶ Rom. xii. 18.

⁷ Sanitatem pacis tenere animus non potest, qui discordiis et certaminibus pascitur.—(*De Catech. Rud. c. 16.*)

peace of the soul, having good alone for their object, true peace can only be found in the search after, and in the enjoyment of, the One true God. For, although the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, of the gifts of fortune, of this world's greatness, and of all those false earthly goods which have no reality, seems to satisfy us in part, through that vain appearance of goodness, under which they are disguised; yet, it is ever accompanied with much reproach, and with many defects that leave us disquieted and restless, and make us acknowledge that peace is found only in the possession of solid and true goods.

Observe, in the third place, that the possession of the true good may be perfect and imperfect; perfect in Heaven, imperfect upon earth. Hence it follows, that there is a true peace which is perfect, and another which is not wholly perfect and complete.

The first consists in the absolute power of the sovereign good, such as we hope for in glory, by which all the desires of our hearts will be perfectly filled, and all the appetitive powers of the soul will remain fully "tranquillized, and at rest in One⁸."

"Perfect⁹ peace will then be ours, when our nature cleaving inseparably to its Creator, nothing in ourselves will rebel against ourselves."

The second consists in the repose and tranquillity of the emotions of the soul; such peace as good men are enabled to find in God during the course of this life, amidst the many things which strive to mar it, whether from within, such as passion and the disorderly desires of sensuality; or from without, such as the world, hell, and the different events which

⁸ Tranquillatæ in uno.—(*Thom.* ii. 2. [q. 29, art. 3, ad 3.] ut desideria nostra conquiescant in uno. (l. ii. q. 70. 3. c.)

⁹ Pax perfecta tunc erit nobis, quando natura nostra Creatori suo inseparabiliter coherente, nihil nobis repugnabit ex nobis.—(*S. Aug. de Contin.* c. 7.)

befall them ; for these hinder not this peace from being an exceeding great good, although as yet it be not wholly perfect, like that of the Blessed. Each is a precious gift, from the rich bountifulness of CHRIST, Who hath obtained it for us at the price of His own Blood, and hath given it to His Disciples once and again. Peace, He saith, I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you¹. "Here, I leave it you ; there, I give it you," that is, in Heaven². "I leave it to those who follow Me³ ; I give it to those who reach unto Me." Here, I leave them a peace begun ; there, I give them a peace perfected. "Seek peace, and pursue it, said the LORD by His Prophet. He did not say to thee, Here ye shall have peace ; but, 'seek it and pursue it.' Whither shall I pursue it ? There where it hath gone before. For JESUS CHRIST is our Peace, and hath risen, and hath ascended into Heaven⁴."

O LORD, suffer me to say to Thee, "what⁵ I long for is peace ; peace I crave ; nothing else do I desire. For whom peace sufficeth not, Thou sufficest not. For Thou art our Peace, Who hath made of two one. This I need, this sufficeth me, to be at peace with Thee, to be at peace with myself. For since Thou

¹ John xiv. 27.

² Hic relinquo, illic do.

³ Sequentibus relinquo, pervenientibus do.—(*S. Greg. ad hæc verba.*)

⁴ Quære pacem, et sequere illam. Non tibi dixit : Habebis hic pacem. Quære illam, et sequere illam. Quo illam sequar ! Quo præcessit. Dominus enim pax nostra, resurrexit et ascendit in cælum.—(*S. Aug. in Psal. xxxiii.*)

⁵ Pacem volo ; pacem desidero ; nihil amplius. Cui non sufficit pax, non sufficis. Tu es enim pax nostra, qui fecisti utraque unum. Hoc mihi necessarium, hoc satis est reconciliari mihi, reconciliari tibi. Nam ex quo posuisti me contrarium tibi, factus sum mihi metipsi gravis.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 18 in Cant. § 4.*)

hast set me contrary to Thee, I have become a burden to myself⁶."

SECOND POINT.

Consider the excellence of peace in its source and in its principle, which is none other than actual charity, accompanied by the auxiliary train of other virtues.

I say, in the first place, that peace is the fruit of charity, because she it is which keepeth us united to God and to our neighbour, and which maketh us to be in harmony with ourselves, by this means working out three unions of great excellence, whereof peace is the centre. For, by making us love God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, our appetitive powers meet in this One Centre, where they find their rest; and by making us love our neighbour as ourselves, it binds us to his will as to our very own, and of two hearts makes but one, through oneness of choice, according to this maxim of morality; "that between two friends, mutual affections are in such perfect harmony, that what the one willeth the other willeth also; the choice of one is the choice of both⁷." Finally, by regulating our self-love, it calms all our passions, and leaving us no subject of strife or war, it establisheth us in perfect peace, which is to the soul what health is to the body, namely, an agreeable harmony of all its powers, as health is a certain agreement, a harmonious concord, a just proportion of the humours which exist in a sound constitution.

I say, in the second place, that peace is the fruit of actual charity, because "habitual charity," as St. Thomas says, "doth not produce peace immediately,

⁶ Job vii. 21.

⁷ Inter amabilia unum ponitur identitas electionis.—
(*Arist. Eth.* ix. ap. S. Thom. l. c.)

but mediately, through actual charity or love⁸," which reigns in the heart, and employeth all the powers of the soul, in order to facilitate the acquisition of the good, the enjoyment whereof it pursues. This it is which made Cajetan say, that the property of love is to "effect the union and rest of all our senses in One, which is God⁹."

I say, in the third place, that peace is the fruit of actual charity, accompanied by the other virtues, which she employeth as allies, to remove every obstacle to peace, and to insure its possession.

For the moral virtues are, with respect to charity, what the organs and members of the body are to the soul: and as the soul can indeed dwell in a mutilated body, but cannot perform in it those actions for which she needeth the dissevered limbs, in like manner charity may, indeed, be in the soul without those virtues which are purely moral and acquired; but she is there bound, as it were, deprived of her organs, and consequently unable to perform all her functions. Yet, further, there are virtues of which she cannot be destitute, without being in danger of ruin, as, for example, those which are required for the observance of God's precepts. Whence we may perceive the great need we have of virtues, in order to acquire or procure peace; above all, those of humility, patience, conformity to the Will of God, and blind obedience to all the orderings of His loving Providence. Of humility; for almost all our disquietudes, vexations, and sorrows, proceed only from some lurking pride, some subtle ambition, some secret esteem of self. And how can I be at peace, when out of my Centre, which is God, away from Which I shall be in

⁸ Pax fluit à charitate habituali non immediate, sed mediante dilectione.—(*S. Thomas Aq.*)

⁹ Operari adunationem et quietem sensuum omnium in uno, quod est Deus.

endless unrest? Of patience; for this life is subject to manifold miseries and untoward accidents, whereof the only remedy is to bear them meekly, when they cannot be avoided. Thy disquiet and murmuring do not free thee from the evil thou endurest; and far from restoring thee the good thou hast lost, they make thee lose one still dearer and more precious, namely, peace and the possession of your soul. "In your patience possess ye your souls." Of conformity to the Will of God, which is the strongest shield against all the evils of this life, and the most universal means of quieting all our troubles, springing as they do, for the most part, only from our resistance to the Divine commands and orderings. We are, perchance, placed where we would not be, or that is done which we would not have done; or, we are required to do something which displeases us: such are the things which oftentimes disturb our peace. Wouldest thou enjoy great peace and great quietness? "Do nothing reluctantly. He is not miserable who doth what he is commanded to do, but he who doth it against his will¹." In all things follow this wise counsel of St. Paul; "Being justified by faith we have peace with God²." "What is it to have peace with God," saith St. Augustine, "but to will what He commandeth, and to nill what He forbiddeth³?" "How can he share the peace of God, whom that pleaseth which displeaseth God, and who seeketh his delight in that whereby he knoweth Him to be offended⁴?" "Who hath ever resisted Him, and had peace⁵?"

¹ Da operam, ne quid unquam invitus facias. Non qui jussus aliquid facit, miser est, sed qui invitus facit.—(*Senec.*)

² Rom. v. 1.

³ Quid est pacem habere ad Deum, nisi velle quod jubet, et nolle quod prohibet?

⁴ Quomodo divinæ particeps erit pacis, cui ea placent quæ Deo displicent, et qui iis appetit delectari, quibus illum novit offendi?

⁵ Job ix. 5. Vulg.

THIRD POINT.

Consider the excellence of peace in its effects. St. Thomas points out two, which we cannot too highly esteem⁶.

The first is, that it "calms the tossing of our wavering desires, since he doth not perfectly joy in any thing, whom that sufficeth not, wherein he joyeth⁷." Oh! if I had but that employment, we often say; Oh! if I were but rid of this business; Oh! if I had but this; Oh! if I had not that. Behold the executioners who torture us, the thorns which tear us, the worms which gnaw our minds. Now, peace hath this property; it stops the violence and impetuosity of the disorderly emotions which agitate our hearts, like a vessel which the winds and waves drive against the rocks. "For," as St. Augustine says, "where peace is, there is rest; where rest is, there is an end of desire, and no need of toil⁸." And the reason is, because God, Who is the Sole Object in Whom we can find peace, sufficeth to the soul, which in Him possesseth, with overflowing abundance, all which she could find, out of Him.

The second effect of peace is the sheltering us from all which could disturb us outwardly⁹. For, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, "he who hath his heart perfectly tranquillized, and at rest in One, cannot be disquieted by aught, because he reputeth all besides as nought¹." "God is in the midst of his soul," therefore shall

⁶ S. Thom. Aq. 1. ii. q. 70. art. 3. in concl.

⁷ Sedatio desiderii fluctuantis. Non enim perfecte de aliquo gaudet, cui non sufficit, de quo gaudet.

⁸ Ubi pax, ibi requies; ubi requies, ibi finis appetendi, et nulla causa laborandi.—(S. Aug. ep. [45] in medio.)

⁹ Quies ab exterioribus perturbantibus.

¹ Qui enim perfecte cor habet pacatum in uno, à nullo alio molestari potest, cum alia quasi nihil reputet.—(S. Thom. 1. c.)

"he not be moved". "Blessed² is that soul which is grounded on the peace of CHRIST, and stayed on the love of God; while it endures wars without, its peace is not troubled within. Whatever disquiets roar without, they burst not in upon the silence of its inward repose. For having felt the taste of that inward sweetness, it is by its longing gathered within, and is not dissipated without, seeing it possesseth within, all wherein it delighteth."

Seeing this is so, thou shouldest, in the first place, conclude that peace being, after the Grace of God, the greatest good which thou canst possess in this life, thou art infinitely beholden to the SON of GOD, Who hath brought it thee from Heaven, and that thou canst neither love Him nor honour Him sufficiently for so great a blessing.

In the second place, that as Satan strives to rob thee of it, by every sort of device, well knowing that it is the best disposition for making progress in virtue, thou must also be most careful to preserve it, and during the day make it a special exercise, consisting in four points:—

1 To watch over self, and never allow the mind to be disquieted or soured by any thing whatsoever; but often to enter into thine inward self, and search diligently in order to see if there be anything which disturbs the soul, or which might disturb it; that it may be set right, and strengthened more and more in a state of secure tranquillity.

² Ps. xlv. 5.

³ Beata illa anima quæ in pace Christi fundata est et in Dei amore solidata; quæ cum exterius bella patitur, pax interior non turbatur. In qua quæcumque molestiæ foris perstrepant, usque ad silentium internæ quietis non irrum-punt. Quoniam gustu internæ dulcedinis tacta, intus est per desiderium collecta, nec jam foris dissolvitur, quia totum intus possidet in quo delectatur.—(*De inter. dom. c. 1. in App. Opp. S. Bern. t. ii. p. 349.*)

2 To strive after great purity of heart, which is usually followed by peace, because it removes every thing which can hinder the union of the soul with God, Who is the Centre of its rest.

3 Often to make acts of Divine love, whereby we may be kept closely united with God, Who dwelleth in us; adoring Him and loving Him, and conforming ourselves sweetly and lovingly to His good pleasure in all things which may happen in the whole world with respect to ourselves and to others. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy Sight." "Thy Will be done."

4 Often to contemplate the meekness of the Son of God, that we may become like unto Him, and that our whole conduct may be animated with His SPIRIT: "What would He have said, What would He have done, How would He have demeaned Himself in such a case?" Often to turn to Him, and, together with the whole Church, say to Him, "Give peace in our time, O Lord!" "Give Thy servants that peace which the world cannot give." I know that it will not be without crosses so long as I live amongst mortal men: the condition of this life does not admit of its being perfect as I would have it to be; but nevertheless, such as it still is, I desire it, and ask it of Thee; for it is the greatest favour and the highest bliss which can come upon me, until I possess it in its fulness, when all the powers of my soul and all the desires of my heart shall be perfectly satisfied with the clear sight of Thine infinite Beauty.

Meditation for the Fourth Tuesday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE APOSTLES, AND
SHEWETH THEM HIS WOUNDS.

“ He shewed unto them His Hands and His side.”
John xx. 20.

REMARK.

IT is certain that our LORD hath willed to retain His Wounds, even after His Resurrection, since He showed Them to His Apostles, and commanded Saint Thomas to touch Them. But it may be asked, Why He hath retained Them, seeing They appear so little suited to His state of Glory, that even the Angels marvel at it, and say, with a deep feeling of wondering admiration, “What are these Wounds in Thine Hands?” To which we may reply, as has been said, that to the Angels They are the glorious Tokens of CHRIST’s Triumph over Death and Hell; to the Apostles, the indisputable Proofs of His Resurrection; to the just, the inexhaustible Sources of grace and of attainments; to sinners, touching Reproaches for their crimes; and to all saints, the inestimable Price of their salvation. But, to comprise all reasons in one alone, we will consider, to-day, those Sacred Wounds as so many Divine Teachers, giving us healthful instructions in the knowledge of the Cross. For, as Saint Bernard says, “Our gracious and loving Captain willeth to be seen, willeth that the eye and look of his devoted soldier should be raised aloft to His Wounds, that thereby He may quicken his courage, and by His own example, make him stronger to endure.” For

⁴ Zech. xiii. 6.

the soldier will not feel his own, while he gazes on His wounds. The martyr stands exulting and triumphing, his whole body torn and rent. Where is the soul of the martyr then? Safe, in the Rock, in the Wounds of Jesus, which stand wide open for him to enter in. When it was within himself, he would feel the scorching heat, would not endure the pain, would give way, decay. Now, away from his body, no marvel it feeleth not the pangs of the body. It is not insensible, but it loves⁵."

FIRST POINT.

After having adored His Sacred Wounds, the first instruction that thou shouldest derive from beholding them upon the Body of thy Master is, that no one is without wounds; that is to say, without affliction, and suffering of mind or body.

For had there ever been one who ought to have been dispensed from them, it was undoubtedly the Son of God, both on account of the dignity of His Person, and the innocency of His life, and the greatness of His Power. Pilate made use of His title of King, in order to exempt Him from suffering." "Shall I," said he to the Jews, "crucify your King?" He alleged His Innocence that he might deliver Him from death: "I find no fault in Him". His Power, which made His enemies fall to the ground in the garden of Olives, ought seemingly to have dispersed the storm which was about to burst upon Him. And nevertheless, neither His Dignity, nor His

⁵ Vult videri, vult benignus dux devoti militis vultum et oculos in sua sustolli vulnera, ut illius ex hoc animam erigat, ex exemplo sui reddat ad tolerantiam fortiorem. Etenim non sentiet sua, cum illius vulnera intuebitur. Stat martyr triumphans et triumphans, etc.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 61 in Cant. § 8. Vide omnino locum.*)

⁶ John xix. 15.

⁷ Luke xxiii. 14.

Innocency, nor His infinite Power, exempted Him from the Cross. Who then will presume to be able to avoid it, if he knows the weakness of his strength, the greatness of his wickedness, and the vileness of his condition, which debaseth him infinitely below his SAVIOUR ?

Furthermore, we may reduce all classes of men under three heads : the God Man, the righteous man, and the guilty man. Ascend Calvary, and thou wilt see all three nailed to the cross.

The sinner is there in the person of the reprobate thief, he is not exempted from suffering. "If he be poor," saith St. Chrysostome, "poverty is his cross. If he escape poverty, his inordinate covetousness will torment him even more than want. If he be afflicted with bad health, his sickness is his cross ; and if he be in health, anger, revenge, avarice, pride, every passion will disturb his tranquillity, and his evil conscience will be to him an intolerable punishment." "Among all the troubles of the human soul, there is none greater than the consciousness of sins *."

The righteous man is also nailed to the cross ; the wicked do not leave good men at rest ; contraries never meet without conflicts and contentions. God Himself proveth them and perfecteth them through sufferings ; but had they nothing to endure, neither on the part of God nor man, they would be a cross to themselves, seeing themselves in sad exile, and sighing after heaven. This life is but one continual suffering, otherwise it would not be a pilgrimage. But if it be indeed a pilgrimage, either thou hast but little longing for thy country, or without doubt thou dost endure suffering †.

* Inter omnes tribulationes humanæ conscientiæ, nulla major quam conscientia delictorum.—(*S. Aug. in Ps. xlv. § 3.*)

† Vita ista tribulatio est. Si non est tribulatio, non est peregrinatio ; si autem peregrinatio est, aut parum patriam

There remaineth then but the God-Man, our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But see whether He is exempted from the cross. Behold His Hands, and His Feet¹. He is, in very truth, the Man of Sorrows, whose Cross weigheth more heavily than that of the whole race of men, both the just and the unjust. So true is it, that every man that cometh into the world, the Godly, the sinner, yea, even the God-Man, is born for and sentenced to the Cross.

"We are the Body of CHRIST, and members in particular²." Hence the Church, which is the assembly of the faithful, calleth Herself the mystical Body of CHRIST, and ought not to be treated better than His real Body. Behold, then, that Adorable Body; thou wilt see It in the garden, bathed in a Bloody Sweat; at the pillar, rent with the scourge; on the Cross, covered with Wounds. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in It³."

And wherefore this? but to teach us, as the Fathers say, that of all the faithful who make part of His mystical Body, there is not one who must not bear His Marks, and partake of His Sufferings. Behold Him even after His Resurrection; He will still shew thee His pierced Hands, Feet, and Side, and if thou no longer seest the thorns upon His Head, it is because the Captain of our Salvation is now impassible. But thou wilt see Wounds upon all the rest of His Body, at the Extremities and in the Midst Thereof, to teach thee that thou must necessarily suffer, if thou art a member of JESUS CHRIST, whether thou be His Feet with Magdalene, by the practice of penitence; or His Hands, by the exercise of good works; or His precious Heart, by the

desideras, aut sine dubio tribularis.—(*S. Aug.*) [See on Ps. lxxvi. § 4; Ps. cxxxvii. § 12; Ps. lxxxv. § 11.]

¹ Luke xxiv. 30.

² 1 Cor. xii. 27.

³ Isa. i. 6.

fervour of love. Sinner, just, or perfect, whichever thou be, thou must suffer; and since the cross is inevitable, in vain dost thou fly from it: rather should thy care be to use it well.

SECOND POINT.

The second instruction which thou shouldest derive from the Wounds of CHRIST, as thou beholdest them on His Glorious Body, is, that His goodness forsaketh us not in sufferings. As He hath not parted from His Wounds, neither doth He part from those who bear them for His sake. "With him that hath set his love upon me, will I be in trouble⁴." "Whence know we that God is with us in trouble?" saith St. Bernard; "we know it, even because we are in trouble. For without Him who could bear it? who could endure it? who could abide and persevere in it?" True friends are tried in the day of adversity. There are but too many self-interested friends, who attach themselves to gold like quicksilver; but if the gold be cast into the fire, this volatile metal separates itself from it, and evaporates in smoke. Such friends are but "companions at the table; they will not continue in the day of thy affliction⁵," but will forsake thee in thy need. It is not thus with the SON of GOD: He is a faithful Friend, Who is never nearer to us than when He seeth us afflicted. Behold His pierced Hands, behold His Feet. It is for this He hath retained His Wounds, and hath, if we may so say, incorporated Them, that He might assure us of His Protection, and fulfil His promise to

⁴ Ps. xci. 15.

⁵ Unde scimus quod nobiscum sit Deus in tribulatione? Ex eo utique, quod in ipsa tribulatione nos simus. Quis enim sustineret, quis persisteret, quis subsisteret sine eo?—(Serm. 16 in Ps. *Qui habitat*, § 3.)

⁶ Eccles. vi. 10.

us, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And verily, although by reason of His Infinity He is present in all things, He is nevertheless in a more special way present with those who are afflicted; because His infinite Goodness, which seeketh but the occasion to do us good, seeing a greater and more urgent occasion in our miseries, is present then in a more gracious manner. Hence those beautiful words of the Royal prophet, "Though the good man fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand⁷." Picture to thyself a crystal ball thrown into the air; on seeing it raised on high, thou wouldest think that it is about to fall and to be shivered into a thousand pieces; but yet there is nought to fear if he who throws it hath skill; for by opening his hand he gently receives it and prevents its being broken. Thus, when we are in adversity, we seem to be rejected and cast off by God, and ready to fall to the ground: but let us not fear, let us trust in His Wise Providence, He will receive us in His Hand, and will keep us There. Whoso had seen Daniel cast into the lions' den, or the children into the furnace of Babylon, or Joseph into prison, would he not have thought that they were lost without resource? But God was there with them, and raised them from their low estate. "He went down with Joseph into the pit," as the Wise Man saith, "and left Him not in bonds⁸." "God," says St. Ambrose, "visiteth His own in prison, and where there is most danger, there He giveth most help. Where doth not Divine mercy penetrate? But what marvel if He visit His own in prison, Who saith, that in His own He is in prison⁹?"

⁷ Ps. xxxvi. 24.

⁸ Wis. x. 13, 14.

⁹ Visitat Deus et in carcere suos; et ideo ibi plus est auxilii, ubi est plus periculi. Quo non penetrat Divina Misericordia? sed quid mirum, si visitat in carcere positos, qui

Oh how much reason had St. Paul to say : since God is with us in affliction, wherein think ye that I take pleasure ? "In my infirmities," and the sickness which affects my health. "In reproaches" and calumnies invented against me, and in the false reports which are everywhere spread abroad in order to make me hateful to men. "In necessities," when I see myself poorly lodged, poorly clothed, poorly fed, and am forced to work by night to supply my wants. "In persecutions," in the inward sorrows that oppress me, in the importunity of my temptations, in the anxious fears for my salvation, in all the "distresses" which I endure "for CHRIST's sake¹." In these is my delight, my glory, my joy. Wherefore ? "That the power of CHRIST may rest upon me." For the more I am afflicted, the nigher is He unto me : and if He is with me in mine affliction, what need I fear ? Am I not too happy ? "Better far for me, O LORD, to be in tribulation if Thou be with me, than to reign without Thee, feast without Thee, without Thee glory. Better far for me to embrace Thee in affliction, and have Thee with me in the furnace, than be without Thee even in Heaven."

THIRD POINT.

The third instruction which thou shouldest derive from the Wounds of CHRIST, as thou beholdest Them in that Place of Honour, all radiant with Divinity, is, that nothing can be more honourable, more sweet,

seipsum in suis in carcere inclusum esse memorat.—(*S. Ambr. de Jos. c. 5.*)

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 10.

² Bonum mihi, Domine, tribulari, dummodo Ipse sis mecum, quam regnare sine Te, epulari sine Te, sine Te gloriari. Bonum in tribulatione magis amplecti Te, in camino habere Te mecum, quam esse sine Te vel in cœlo.—(*Serm. 17 in Ps. Qui habitat, § 4.*)

and more useful to the Christian soul, than to suffer in the service of God.

Nothing can be more honourable, both because CHRIST JESUS hath Deified Sufferings and Wounds, and made them glorious, by retaining them engraved upon His Sacred Humanity, and thus united to His Divine ; and because, by His Wounds, He hath merited the Glory of His Body, Its Impassibility, Its Resurrection, Its Ascension, Its Dwelling at the Right Hand of His Father, and Its Last Coming as the Sovereign Judge of the quick and the dead ; and, finally, because He hath made all the glory of the Saints to consist in this : so that it may with truth be said, that the Cross hath glorified JESUS, that JESUS hath glorified the Cross, and that the Cross of JESUS glorifieth all Saints.

Nothing can be sweeter ; because JESUS is Uncreated Wisdom, Whose property it is to sweeten all that is united to It, as we see the graft of a good tree sweetens the sap of the wild stock upon which it is grafted. Wherefore, by taking Wounds and Sufferings upon Himself, He hath deprived them of their bitterness, and hath infused into them the sweetness of His Wisdom. Hence poverty, chastity, forgiveness of injuries, and the other evangelical virtues, which were before so difficult, now appear sweet to those souls which are united by a holy bond to the SON of GOD, Who hath Himself set them an example thereof.

Nothing can be more useful ; for we find in the Wounds of CHRIST all the graces needful for attaining salvation ; and we apply them to ourselves, by enduring all that He sendeth upon us during this our time of exile.

PRACTICE OF ST. BERNARD.

St. Bernard says that devout souls are like bees,

which make a great noise as they fly in the air, until they find some flower which stayeth them. For then they enter within it, to gather and collect their honey in silence and in peace. Thus, so long as the servants of God seek any consolation from creatures in their afflictions, all is noise, and excitement, and murmuring, and tumult, and disquiet; until they cast themselves into the Saviour's Wounds, and enter into the Clefts of that Sacred Rock, There to taste the sweetness of true consolation³.

If the soul be still weak, and say, like the steward in the Gospel, "I cannot dig⁴;" I have not strength nor elevation enough to penetrate the secrets of the Divinity; then, in this virgin earth of CHRIST's Body, are pointed out to her trenches and openings already made, wherein she may enter without toil, and remain hidden until she hath gained strength to dig into the Rock; that is, to proceed from the contemplation of the Sacred Humanity to that of the Divine Perfections of her Saviour, when she hath acquired a greater purity of heart and greater fervour of spirit⁵.

If she be tempted and importuned by some vice or passion, where can she find a more secure retreat than in the Wounds of CHRIST? "In His Wounds I abide secure; the more mighty He is to save, the more peacefully do I abide therein⁶." "The world oppresseseth, the flesh depresseth, Satan besetteth; I

³ Per has rimas licet mihi sugere mel de petra, oleum-que de saxo durissimo.—(*Deut.* xxxii. 13. *Serm.* 61 in *Cant.* § 4.)

⁴ Luke xvi. 3.

⁵ Fossa ostenditur humus, ubi lateat, donec convalescat et proficiat, ut possit et ipsa per se cavare foramina in petra, per quæ intret ad interiora Verbi, animi utique vigore et puritate.—(*Serm.* 62 in *Cant.* § 6.)

⁶ Tanto illic securior habito, quanto ille potentior est ad salvandum.—(*Ib.* *Serm.* 61, § 3.)

fall not, because I am founded upon the firm Rock'."

If the sins of her past life and remorse of conscience disquiet her, let her, with the penitent Magdalene, cast herself at the Saviour's Feet. They had not yet been pierced when she There found her healing: now that deep and open Wounds are seen in Them, she will doubtless find Therein a more ready and infallible remedy. "I have sinned a great sin; my conscience is troubled; yet will it not be overwhelmed, so long as I remember the LORD'S Wounds. For 'He was wounded for our transgressions.' What so deadly that the Death of CHRIST cannot heal?"

If she be tempted by despair, let her not go forth from within those Sacred Wounds; they are a sure Refuge, where it is not possible to perish. I see no disease in my soul, how great soever it be, which can rob me of my confidence, with so powerful a remedy at hand. In the Bowels of my Saviour I find all I lack: They overflow with mercy, and His Wounds are clefts and channels through which this mercy floweth forth upon me⁷. Whatever terror may lay hold upon me, I will go and hide me in those deep Caves, Where I will keep so close that He shall never find me away from Him; and thus shall I be at rest. For finding me within Himself, He will not turn me away; since He hath Himself said, "Whoso cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." Therefore He could not judge me without condemning Himself, and denying His Own Words.

⁷ *Fremi mundus, premit corpus, diabolus insidiatur: non cado; fundatus enim sum supra firmam petram.—(Ib.)*

⁸ *Peccavi peccatum grande, turbabitur conscientia, sed non perturbabitur, quoniam vulnerum Domini recordabor. Nempe vulneratus est propter iniquitates nostras. Quid tam ad mortem, quod morte Christi non sanetur!—(Ibid.)*

⁹ *Ib. § 4.*

If she be living in the practice of good works, her shelter is in the Hands of the Son of God. Prosperity will make her enter into the Right, and adversity into the Left Hand, and she will say with Job, "Shall I receive good at the Hand of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil?" True it is, that at the Last Judgment, we must not wish to be found on the Left Hand; for That is the Hand of vengeance, Which will destroy the reprobates; Its stroke would be too heavy for us to bear—and this is the only ill which we should fear; but during the course of this life, It is the Hand of a Father, as well as the Right; and the Spouse says that in It she finds rest and support¹.

Finally, when she has reached the state of the perfect, the Wound of the Heart is open to her. She has a right to dwell There, and There to feed upon a hidden Manna, which she would not exchange for all the delights of earth. Then, beholding those Blessed Wounds, she seemeth to hear Him say, "See, with no feigned love have I loved thee²." Then it is that she is permitted to touch with her lips that wounded Side, and Thence to "suck" the Blood Which inspireth her with so intense a longing for suffering, that she finds neither sweetness nor repose save in the afflictions and humiliations which come upon her. Special favour! for which St. Bernard tenderly and lovingly sighed, saying, with a deep feeling of humility: "LORD, it is too great a presumption for a heart so impure as mine to dare to approach unto Thine, and enter within Thy Sacred Side. Alas! when I think of going forth from the Wounds of Thy Feet, Where I hide me with sinners who weep for their crimes, in order to enter into

¹ His Left Hand is under my head, and His Right Hand doth embrace me.—(*Cont.* ii. 6.)

² Vide quod non te simulate dilexi.

That Heart Which is the Sanctuary of the Divinity, I hear a voice saying to me, 'Touch me not;' and, confounded at the remembrance of my sins, I am constrained to return to my Place of Refuge, and embrace the Feet of Thy Mercy and of Thy Justice; now having recourse to the One, and now to the Other. But, LORD, I confess that the remembrance of what I have seen but through the opening of Thy Side, quickly rekindles my longing, and makes me exclaim with fresh ardour, 'Shall I always abide here? Shall I never enter That Wounded Side? How long will fear and the voice of my guilty conscience keep me at thy Feet?' But Thou answerest not; and I do but groan and faint with the desire of loving Thee, waiting for that blissful moment when Thou shalt call me to Thyself."

Meditation for the Fourth Wednesday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE APOSTLES, AND GIVETH THEM THE HOLY GHOST WITH POWER TO REMIT SINS.

"He breathed upon them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the HOLY GHOST. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."—John xx. 22, 23.

REMARK.

It may be asked how what St. John here affirms agrees with that which our LORD Himself declared to His Apostles, the evening before His Passion, when He said to them, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the COMFORTER will not come unto you?" We reply, that the HOLY SPIRIT is here given, but in a special manner, and in

secret ; and that the SON of GOD speaks of the solemn and public descent of the HOLY GHOST, which was not to take place till after His Ascension, when He should be exalted to the Throne of His Glory. Wherefore, on the day of Pentecost, It descended in the form of fiery tongues, with the noise of thunder and a mighty rushing wind, so that the whole city of Jerusalem was moved thereat, because It came with all the fulness of Its Gifts, to change the face of the earth. But JESUS, in giving It to His Disciples, did but gently breathe upon them ; thus, indeed, plainly pointing out the True Source and Principle Whence It proceedeth, but making no display, because It is given only for some special, although very mighty, effects. These will form the subject of the following Meditation.

FIRST POINT.

The SON of GOD, by breathing upon the Apostles, gives them the HOLY SPIRIT, to comfort them in their affliction, and strengthen their minds against the fear of the Jews. This is the thought both of St. Cyril and St. Jerome, who bring forward the words of the prophet Nahum, as bearing on this subject, which, according to the Septuagint version, runs thus : " God will arise and breathe upon the face of Judah, to draw him out of his affliction ³." " For JESUS, when He had ascended from hell, and taken upon Him a new Life, breathed upon the Apostles, saying unto them, Receive ye the HOLY GHOST." For thus we have been delivered from all evil, and being made partakers of the HOLY GHOST, are spiritually recast into that former image. For through the SPIRIT our LORD JESUS CHRIST is formed in us." And St. Jerome also says : " CHRIST cometh to thee, Who had before breathed upon thy face when He

³ Nahum i. 15.

formed thee from the dust, and after His Resurrection, breathing upon the faces of the Apostles, said, 'Receive ye the HOLY GHOST.' He it is Who delivereth thee out of tribulation⁴."

And, in truth, what signifieth that "broiled fish," and that "honeycomb," the remains of which He gave to His Disciples, after having eaten of them Himself, on the very day of His Glorious Rising from the grave, but what St. Paul saith, that the abundance of the consolation which CHRIST procureth for us by His Divine SPIRIT (figured by the honeycomb), is in proportion to the multitude of ills which, after His Example, we endure⁵, of which the broiled fish is the figure, according to the words of St. Augustine⁶? For He it is "Who comforteth us in all our tribulations," and giveth us His HOLY SPIRIT, "that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble⁷." I say "in any trouble;" for the SPIRIT of JESUS comforteth not those which live in pleasure. "In His Passion He is as a broiled fish; in His Resurrection as a honeycomb⁸." He separateth not the one from the other. Refuse not, then, the tribulation He sendeth thee, if thou wouldest enjoy the consolation; but rather ask of Him His HOLY SPIRIT, that thou mayest use it aright.

SECOND POINT.

The Son of God giveth His HOLY SPIRIT to His

⁴ Venit tibi Christus, qui prius insufflaverat in faciem tuam, quum te de limo fingeret, et post resurrectionem insufflans in faciem apostolorum ait: Accipite Spiritum Sanctum. Ipse est qui te liberat de tribulatione.

⁵ As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by CHRIST.—2 Cor. i. 5.

⁶ Piscis assus Christus est passus.—(S. Aug. tract 123. S. Greg. Hom. 24 in Ev. § 5.)

⁷ 2 Cor. i. 4.

⁸ Piscis assus in Passione, favus mellis in resurrectione.—(Hugo Card.)

Apostles by a breath of His Mouth, in order to establish the ordinance of Penitence, and, through their ministry, to remit all sins which are committed on earth.

He breathes upon the face of the Apostles; for even as the breath proceedeth from the inward self, so doth the power He giveth them proceed from the exceeding greatness of His Love.

He giveth them the HOLY GHOST, because the remission of sins is a work of mercy attributed to the HOLY SPIRIT, as works of wisdom are to the WORD, and works of power to the ETERNAL FATHER.

He chooses the day of the Resurrection, which is a day of joy, on which to institute penitence; for penitence causes joy in Heaven and earth, by restoring to life the sinner, whose conversion is in truth an Easter Day, making him to pass from death to the life of the soul, from sin to grace. If to be freed from a dangerous sickness, to escape shipwreck and reach the harbour in safety after a fearful tempest, to recover life, to find a treasure, or to be restored to the favour of a prince, who loads us with kindness and repairs all our losses, be a great cause for joy; with what gladness ought not the sinner if he be wise, to draw near to the sacred ordinance of penitence, seeing that there he finds the cure for all the diseases of his soul, the haven of salvation after shipwreck, the life of the Spirit, the treasure of grace, which giveth a new life to his works, and restores him to the favour of his God, which enriches him with the gifts of Heaven, and restores to him with increased glory all the rights to the Heavenly Inheritance which he had before his fall? Contemplate with wondering admiration the bounty of CHRIST JESUS our LORD, in imparting to man so marvellous a power. For what is greater than to remit sins?

Is it not greater even than to raise the dead to life? And yet, see with what ease He giveth this power: for it needeth but these words, "I absolve thee;" with what mildness; for no other defence, no other justification is required from the penitent, than confession and contrition for his crime, in order to be absolved, and to receive, with the Absolution of His sins, instead of an eternal punishment which he had deserved, a very light temporal penance: finally, with what largeness; for there is no sin which cannot be remitted, in the sacred ordinance of penitence, at what time, and in what place soever, and how great soever be the number and the enormity of the sins that have been committed. O Infinite Goodness! O Mercy worthy of the Love of God! Who shall henceforth despair of salvation? Who would not love so gracious a Master? a Master, Who with such love and bounty, giveth unto His servants that which cost Him so dear?

O ye Priests, who stand in the place of so pitiful, so mild, so merciful a Judge, see with what charity ye ought to deal with sinners, with what care, with what patience, and with what readiness ye ought to aid them. "Take heed ^o what ye do; for ye judge not for man but for the LORD, Who is with you in the judgment. Let the Fear of the LORD be with you, take heed and do it; for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."

O ye penitents, for whose sake this ordinance of mercy hath been established, withdraw not yourselves from it, through a shameful fear, or a hurtful contempt, or a miserable lawlessness. Draw near to it without delay, approach it with loving sorrow; go "boldly to the throne of grace, that ye may ob-

tain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need¹."

"I will praise Thee, O LORD my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify Thy Name for evermore: for great is Thy mercy towards me; and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell²." O how many sins hast Thou forgiven me? How many times hast thou drawn me out of the pit? What should I not do in acknowledgment of Thy Mercies?

THIRD POINT.

JESUS giveth the Holy Ghost to His Apostles by breathing upon them, in order to confirm them in the belief of His Resurrection, and in the hope of rising again hereafter, through His Almighty Power, which will restore the dead to life at the end of the world, even as He gave life to the first man, by the Breath of His Mouth.

Consider the care our LORD takes to assure His Disciples of the truth of this mystery, by every possible proof: through the sight, by appearing in the midst of them; through the hearing, by accosting them and speaking familiarly to them; through the taste, by eating with them; through the smell, by breathing upon them, and perfuming them with the sweet fragrance of His Breath; through the touch, by inviting them to thrust their hand into the Wounds of His Body.

Thus it is that thou must give proofs of thy Spiritual resurrection.

1 Through the sight; by visiting hospitals and other places, where charity, devotion, and humility, are exercised.

2 Through the hearing; by celebrating the praises of God, by holy conversation, by comforting the

¹ Heb. iv. 16.

² Ps. lxxxvi. 12, 13.

afflicted, by giving good counsel, reproving vice with discreet zeal, and inciting thy neighbours to virtue.

3 Through the touch ; by meekly enduring rough treatment, and by willingly mortifying thy body.

4 Through the taste ; by cutting off all pleasant food, which exceeds the bounds of temperance.

5 And finally, through the smell ; by diffusing around the perfume of thy good example, so that thou mayest say with the Apostle : " We are a sweet savour of CHRIST³."

Meditation for the Fourth Thursday after Easter.

CHRIST APPEARETH TO HIS DISCIPLES EIGHT DAYS AFTER HIS RESURRECTION, THOMAS BEING WITH THEM. THE EXCEEDING GRACIOUSNESS OF JESUS TOWARDS THIS FAITHLESS DISCIPLE.

" And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My Hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my Side, and be not faithless, but believing."
—John xi. 26, 27.

REMARK.

Holy Scripture says not, in express terms, where the disciples were when St. Thomas was with them, and had the joy of seeing His Risen Lord, and of touching His Sacred Wounds. Rupert has supposed it to have been in Galilee, whither the Apostles had been commanded to repair⁴. St. Jerome appears to favour this opinion, by saying, " that Jesus was

³ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

⁴ Rupert x. 20.

seen and worshipped upon a mountain of Galilee, and that then He made Himself more manifestly known to St. Thomas, by shewing him His Side wounded with the spear, and His Hands pierced with nails⁵." Nevertheless, the more general opinion is, that this Appearance took place at Jerusalem, in the same apartment where the disciples were assembled on Easter day. And indeed, the words of St. John, "after eight days, again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them," intimate it clearly enough. For, without noting any change of place, he says, that, "after eight days, they were again within," when our Lord manifested His Mercy towards that doubting disciple, as we shall see in the next Meditation.

FIRST POINT.

With what admirable patience does Jesus bear with the erring Thomas! The unbelief of this Apostle was without excuse; he ought to have believed the Word of God Which had foretold His Resurrection; the testimony of St. Peter, who had seen Him risen, and that of all the rest of the disciples, to whom He had appeared. "He that is hasty to give credit is light-minded," saith the Wise Man⁶: but it is obstinacy not to yield one's own judgment to the word of many persons worthy of belief. This is the sin of the irreligious and of heretics, who say with St. Thomas, "Except I see, I will not believe⁷." And yet, in the things of God, faith must go before sight. Ye will not understand the mysteries of religion, if ye believe them not. Even the blessed see nothing in Heaven, but what they have believed on earth⁸.

⁵ S. Hieron. in c. 28. Matth.

⁶ Ecclus. xix. 4.

⁷ John xx.

⁷ Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis.—(Isa. vii. 9.)

⁸ Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God.—(Ps. xlviii. 8.)

His presumption was extreme; for he was preferring his own judgment before that of all the Apostles, whom he was accusing of simplicity; and perhaps the contempt he felt for them was the reason of his leaving the place where they were assembled, at the evident risk of being lost himself: besides being by his absence deprived of the joy of seeing his Master, and [for the time] of the signal favour He bestowed upon His Disciples, in giving them the Holy Ghost. So dangerous is it to separate ourselves from the society of good men, or to despise their advice, and to wish to distinguish ourself from others by a spirit of singularity; seeing that, as St. Leo says, "Satan, never weary and ever watchful, lieth in wait unceasingly, if so be he may find some sheep wandering negligently from CHRIST's fold, which he may lead along the descent of pleasure and the bye-paths of luxury to the hostelry of death."

But who would not wonder at his ingratitude, his rashness, and his want of reverence towards his Master? His ingratitude; for the recollection of the rank he held about CHRIST's Person, and the favours he had received from Him, ought to have retained him in his duty. His rashness; for he would prescribe laws to his Sovereign and his God. His want of reverence; for, had he not lost all respect, ought not the thought only of thrusting his hand into the SAVIOUR's Side to have made him tremble with fear? "Why," says St. Chrysologus, "doth Thomas explore so awful a way for his faith? Why doth he examine in this dread way the Resurrection of Him Who so pitifully suffered death for Him? Why doth a loving hand seek to open afresh the

⁹ Diabolus captat indefessus et pervigil, si quas reperiat oves a sacris gregibus negligentius evagantes, quas per procliva voluptatum et per divexa luxuriæ in diversoria mortis inducat.—(S. Leo, *Serm. 2 de quadr.* § 2.)

Wounds which the hands of the wicked planted there? Why would the hand of the obedient open anew the Side which the lance of the impious pierced? Why doth the pitiless curiosity of a disciple renew the pangs inflicted by the frenzy of the persecutors? Why will he only acknowledge his SAVIOUR by Agonies, his God but by Sufferings, and his Heavenly Physician but by Wounds¹?"

And yet Jesus beareth with him with a meekness unparalleled; and far from punishing his unbelief, He maketh it a sovereign remedy for the cure of ours, and the strengthening of our faith. Who would not admire the Patience, who would not love the kindness, of so good a Master? Enter a little into thyself, and see if some one of these faults rule not in thy heart. Avoid, especially, the immortification of thy judgment. Follow willingly the judgment of others. Though thine own be good, still the affection thou hast for it, with thy unwillingness to yield to that of others, when reason or occasion so requires it, is always the sign of a proud and obstinate spirit².

SECOND POINT.

JESUS bringeth back St. Thomas from his errors with unexampled charity.

1 He doth for him alone what He had done for all the others together. He esteemeth not the multitude nor the throng. There is no single soul which

¹ Cur Thomas vestigia fidei sic requirit? Cur tam pie patientem, tam dure discutit resurgentem? Cur ea vulnera quæ manus infixit impia, devota dextera sic resulcat? Cur latus quod impii lancea patefecit, refodere nititur manus obsequentis? Cur dolores furoribus persecutorum irrogatos famulantis curiositas renovat immitis? Cur tormentis Dominus, cur poenis Deum, cur cœlestem medicum probaturum de vulnere discipulus sic requirit?—(*S. Chrysa. Serm. 84.*)

² Vide l. i. de Imit. Christi, cap. 9.

is not dear to Him, because there is not one which hath not cost Him His life³.

2 He is the first to seek him. It would seem that it is for the servant to seek his master, and the sick man to call in the physician. Thomas, therefore, ought to seek Jesus; but he will not, and he even cannot, if Jesus prevent him not. "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned⁴." "Thou shalt call" me by the voice of Thy gentle inspirations, "and I will answer Thee" from the grave of my wickednesses, and Thou wilt stretch forth Thy Hand to me, that Mighty Hand Whose work I am, and which brought me forth from nothingness⁵. I well know that "Thou numberest all my steps," but I beseech Thee to pardon me all my sins. For I trust that Thy Mercy will triumph over Thy Justice.

3. He entereth the room in an extraordinary and miraculous manner. His wont is to knock at the door of the heart, and to wait for it to be opened to Him⁶. But here He worketh a miracle; He entereth through closed doors, because miracles are for unbelievers⁷. In order to cure the unbelief of His Disciple, He must needs give a token of His Almighty Power, to which all creatures bow unresistingly⁸.

4. He showeth him His Wounds, and maketh him touch them. "Reach hither thy finger," He saith to him, "and behold My Hands. And reach hither thy

³ See how for one man, Thomas, the Lord vouchsafed thus to condescend, and to shew His side, that He might save one unbelieving soul. So we too ought not to despise one, the very least.—(*Theoph.*)

⁴ Jer. xxxi. 18.

⁵ Job xiv. 15.

⁶ Rev. iii. 20. I stand at the door and knock.

⁷ Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not.—(1 Cor. xiv. 22.)

⁸ Tali indicio se totius creaturæ demonstrat auctorem cui non obstitit, cui ad omnia deservit creatura.—(*S. Chrys. Serm.* 84.)

hand, and thrust it into My Side." Thou thoughtest not that I was present, when thou saidst that thou wouldst see My Wounds, and lay thine hand upon Them before thou wouldst believe that I was risen; but I will show thee that being What I Am, thou canst hide nothing from My Wisdom, and that My Goodness can withhold nothing from thy desires⁹. Draw near to Me, behold My Wounds, lay thy finger upon them, thrust thy hand into My Side, "and be not faithless, but believing." "Open These Wounds afresh, that They may shed the light of faith through the whole world, as They have already shed forth Water for the cleansing, and Blood for the ransom of mankind¹."

O infinite Wisdom, Who seest all things, look on me in pity. O Sovereign Goodness, Who condescendest to our desires with such sweetness, let one Drop of Blood from Thy precious Wounds flow upon me, that It may heal the wounds of my soul, that so she may adore and love Thee for ever. This is the only desire which I would henceforth cherish in my heart, stifling all others which are contrary to Thy Love. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord²."

THIRD POINT.

JESUS restoreth St. Thomas to his former estate, and in His sacred Wounds maketh him to find with increase all that he had lost through unbelief.

1. He had lost faith, and consequently, all the

⁹ Thomæ verbis usus ostendit Christus, se cum hæc Thomas diceret, adfuisse.—(*Ammonius in Catena Græcorum. Vide hic Euthym. et S. Chrys.*)

¹ Ut effundant toto orbe, iterum te aperiente, hæc vulnera fidem, quæ aquam in lavacrum, et sanguinem in omnium pretium jam fuderunt.—(*S. Chrysost. Serm. 84.*)

² Ps. cvii. 43.

supernatural virtues of which faith is the foundation. But he recovereth it by thrusting his hand into his Master's Side, and he can say with the kingly Prophet, "I sought the LORD with my hand in the night, and was not deceived³." I was as a blind man in the noon day, unable to believe that the Sun of Righteousness had risen from the shades of death. I desired to touch His Wounds in order to cure my blindness, and to convince myself by my own hands. I have not been deceived, I have seen Him, I have touched Him, and I have recovered my sight. I believe that "my Redeemer liveth:" I acknowledge Him for "my LORD and my GOD⁴."

2. During his absence, the Son of GOD had given peace to His Disciples, had made them masters of the world, the dispensers of the Divine Mysteries, the pastors of His Church, and the ministers of His Word. "Thomas was not with them when JESUS came." Will he then be deprived of all these favours, and must the world lose so worthy a pastor, and the Church, which is the LORD's vineyard, so good a labourer? In no wise. The Heart of JESUS is no longer a closed treasury: It is open, and His pierced Hands can no longer withhold anything. Thomas there finds peace, he there finds his mission, his authority, his employment, with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which make him a very faithful witness, "and most unshaken confessor of the Resurrection of the LORD⁵." O breathgiving Wounds, which restore life to the dead, health to the sick, sight to the blind! Precious Wounds, which build up the faith of the Resurrection and of the Divinity of CHRIST⁶! O how great a sign of

³ Ps. lxxvii. 2.

⁴ John xx. 28.

⁵ S. Bern. hom. 2. super Missus est, § 12.

⁶ Bona foramina quæ fidem astruunt Resurrectionis, et Christi divinitatem.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 61 in Cant.*)

wisdom is it often to lift up our thoughts, our affections, and our desires into that Heart pierced by love, and to raise the building of salvation upon this memorable rock! "What blessing hath not that Rock? On the Rock do I stand on high; on the Rock am I in safety; on the Rock stand I firmly, strong against falling, because lifted up on high from the earth."

Meditation for the Fourth Friday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO HIS DISCIPLES EIGHT
DAYS AFTER EASTER, THOMAS BEING WITH
THEM. THE HOLY AFFECTIONS OF THIS APO-
STLE AT THE SIGHT OF HIS MASTER.

"My LORD and my GOD."—John xx. 28.

REMARK.

It may be asked whether St. Thomas was converted at the sight only of the Sacred Wounds of CHRIST, or whether he did really touch them before believing. Some think that he did not touch them through reverence, and St. Augustine says, "it possibly was so." Nevertheless he says elsewhere, "that he did touch them in obedience to his Master, and for our instruction; but that he had been already convinced of the truth of the Resurrection at the sight only of those Glorious Scars."

St. Gregory says, "By touching them he was

¹ Quid non boni in petra!

² In petra exaltatus, in petra securus, in petra firmiter sto; securus ab hoste, fortis a casu, et hoc quoniam exaltatus a terra.—(S. Bern. Serm. 61 in Cant.)

³ Tract 121 in Joan. fin.

brought back to faith¹." St. Ambrose; "while as yet he believes not, he touched CHRIST," and "that after having touched the Side of CHRIST with his own hand, he said with the full affection of reverence and piety, "My LORD and my GOD²!" Memorable words, which betoken the holy affections of his heart; and such ought we also to call forth when at the foot of the Cross, and when we partake of the Divine Mysteries.

FIRST POINT.

"My LORD and my GOD." Faith speaks through his lips, and shines the more brightly, inasmuch as he had hardened himself so greatly against belief³. "If he failed in not believing as quickly as he ought," says Cajetan, "he made full amends by the excellency of his Confession. For he was the first who plainly confessed that JESUS CHRIST was Very God, and Very Man⁴."

"My LORD and my GOD." Thou art my GOD; for none other than GOD can raise himself to life by his own power. Thou art "my LORD," because Thou art "my GOD." Thou art "my LORD and my GOD," because Thou art my SAVIOUR, Who hast redeemed me by Thy Sacred Wounds, and hast made me Thy slave. GOD only could not die. Man only could not justly pay my debts. Thou art then Very God and Very Man, since thou hast died in order to give me a new freedom and life. I see the one, and I believe the other. I see the Man, and believe Thee, GOD⁵." Those precious Wounds,

¹ Thomas ad fidem palpando reducitur.—(*Hom. 26 in Evang. § 7.*)

² In S. Luc. x. 168.

³ In Psal. xliii. § 14.

⁴ Thomas incredulitatis suæ culpam magnitudine professionis pensavit. Primus enim fuit qui professus sit expresse Jesum esse verum Deum.—(*Cai. in Joam. 12.*)

⁵ Aliud vidit, aliud credidit; hominem vidit, et Deum confessus est.—(*S. Greg. hom. 26, § 8. S. Aug. l. c.*)

that opened Heart, those pierced Hands, are to me living Founts of light, enlightening my blindness, and discovering to me the incomprehensible love of Thy Divine Nature hidden beneath the veil of our humanity.

SECOND POINT.

“My LORD and my GOD.” It is the moaning of a wandering dove, deploring her error at the feet of her LORD and her GOD.

The prophet Isaiah represents the Apostles to us as “clouds flying through the world, and as the doves to their windows⁶.” The Son of GOD Himself wills that they should be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” Thomas ranked high amongst these doves: a dove upon the top of the Cross is given him as a symbol⁷; but he had forgotten the precept of his Master. He was not simple enough, because he sought to be too wise. This was the cause of his error, by which he was on the point of being caught in the snare of the devil; but having happily found a refuge in the Wounds of CHRIST JESUS, he hides himself Therein, as a dove in the clefts of the Rock, There to be sheltered and to mourn at leisure, confessing his fault with real sorrow of heart.

“My LORD and my GOD.” Alas! I have fallen; I own it, and am confounded. I have deferred too much to my own opinion and judgment; I ought rather to have submitted to the opinion of others. I confess my fault, and acknowledge Thee for my LORD and my GOD.

Behold the “dove in the Clefts of the Rock.” “Let me hear thy voice⁸.” Behold her mournings, behold her security. “⁹In these precious Clefts the

⁶ Isa. lx. 8.

⁷ Baronius.

⁸ Cant. ii. 14.

⁹ In his foraminibus se columba tutatur, et circumvoli-

dove is safe; and fearlessly beholds the kite still hovering around the Rock;” yet not daring to approach thereto. “O life-giving Clefts¹, witnesses of the Resurrection, and of the Divinity of CHRIST! ‘My LORD and my GOD,’ saith the Apostle. Whence issueth this oracle, but from the Clefts in the Rock, His SAVIOUR’S Wounds¹?”

THIRD POINT.

“My LORD and my GOD.” It is a cry of joy and love! He is overwhelmed with joy at having found his Master, Whom he thought he had lost; and his love rekindles by touching the Wound of His Heart, which is a burning furnace, whence proceed anew a thousand sparks of that divine love which kindled him when he said, before the SAVIOUR’S Passion: “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

St. John describes the Church to us under the figure of “a woman clothed with the sun, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,” that is the twelve Apostles, who form her chief ornament, luminaries to give her light. The dragon who sat watching her, and “whose tail had drawn down the third part of the stars of Heaven, and cast them to the earth,” sought also to draw away Thomas, one of the brightest jewels of that starry crown. But the SON of GOD, Who sustaineth His elect, and upholdeth them with His Hand, lest they fall and be cast down², keepeth him from perishing in the precipice where he had fallen. He shews him Those Hands and that Side; He upholds and lifts Him up again, even *tantum intrepida intuetur accipitrem.*—(*S. Bern. Sermon. 61 in Cant. § 3.*)

¹ Bona foramina quæ fidem astruunt Resurrectionis, et Christi Divinitatem. Dominus meus, inquit, et Deus meus. Unde hoc reportatum oraculum nisi ex foraminibus petrae? —(*Ib.*)

² Ps. xxxvii. 24.

to this admirable confession of the Divinity: "My LORD and my God." Oh what joy for the Apostle! Oh how burning his love at this surpassing mercy! "Oh blessed Thomas! blessed the licence which thine hand hath received! for what permission, or what favour can be so great, as to thrust the hand into that Side, which hath all sweetness and all health; That Side, Which is the Source of Salvation; that Side, I say, whereby we are saved from wrath, healed from sin, born anew in grace, raised on high in everlasting glory!"

Hence learn with what feelings thou oughtest to repeat these loving words, "my LORD and my God," when thou receivest the Bread of Life."

Say then, with a lively faith in the Real Presence of JESUS CHRIST, a deep sense of the favour He conferreth on thee,—“My LORD and My God,” I believe that thou art here present, hidden under the veil of the outward elements; I renounce all my senses, and I forbid my mind to judge otherwise of this mystery. Thou art my GOD and my SAVIOUR, on Thee have I waited all the day long.

Say then, in a penitential and humble spirit, with a deep feeling of sorrow and shame at thy sins, “My LORD and My God,” Alas what have I done? I have sinned against Thee my LORD and my GOD. I am not worthy to draw nigh to Thee. “O Lamb of God, which takest away the sins of the world,” I implore thee, by Those Sacred Wounds Which Thou hast preserved, as the sole remedy of sinners, to have mercy upon me!

* O felix Thoma, quam felicem habuit licentiam manus tua! magna quippe licentia et magna gratia est mittere manum in latus illud dulcissimum, in latus illud saluberrimum, in latus, inquam, unde ab ira salvamur, unde a culpa sanamur, unde in gratia generamur, unde in gloria sublimamur.—(*Ludolphus, in vita Christi*, P. ii. c. 78.)

Say then, with a feeling of love and joy ; " Cry out and shout, inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Go " with joy, and draw waters of Grace out of the Wells of Salvation ⁴."

Say to Him with confidence : " Behold God is my Salvation : I will trust and not be afraid ⁵. For He is " my LORD and my God."

O sweet word ! " My LORD and my God." O word, full of divine sweetness ! but to him that loveth the eternal Word, not " the world, nor the things that are in the world." " My LORD and my God." This word is quickly understood by him that loveth, and never is he weary of repeating it. I will say it all my life long ; I will say it in the hour of death ; I will say it in eternity. This is the desire of my soul ; this is the grace I ask of Thee, " my LORD and my God." Shoot forth from Thy loving Wounds Thy beams and Thy Lightnings, and pierce with Thy bright and searching flame, the most secret folds of my heart. Enlighten my spirit, kindle my will, make me to love Thee, make me to find my life and my joy in Thee, that so being, as it were, transported out of myself, I may cleave to Thee Alone, Who art my LORD and my God, with all the powers and all the feelings of my soul, for ever and more than for ever ⁶.

⁴ Is. xii. 36.

⁵ Ib. v. 2.

⁶ Dominus meus et Deus meus in æternum et ultra.

Meditation for the Fourth Saturday after Easter.

JESUS APPEARETH TO THE APOSTLES, EIGHT
DAYS AFTER EASTER, THOMAS BEING WITH
THEM, AND COMMENDETH FAITH.

“Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed :
blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”
—John xx. 29.

REMARK.

THESE words may be explained in two ways. “Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed.” That is to say, thou hast been convinced that I was raised from the dead, because thou hast seen Me ; the proof thou hast had thereof, by seeing Me, and touching Me, hath convinced thee of this truth : blessed are they who have believed and who shall believe that I am raised again, without having seen Me. Thy belief is but a knowledge which thou hast acquired through thy senses ; for we believe not with a Divine faith what we see ; but their belief is an act of faith, and that which is to “thee an object of the senses, to them hath passed into sacraments.” “In order that faith might be of a higher and more enduring nature,” adds St. Leo⁷, “sight gave way to doctrine, whose authority the hearts of believers are to follow, enlightened by the rays from above.” The other explanation is that of St. Augustine, St. Gregory, and St. Hilary : “Thomas, because thou hast seen Me,

⁷ Quod Redemptoris nostri conspicuum fuit in Sacramenta transivit. Et ut fides excellentior esset ac firmior, visioni doctrina successit, cujus auctoritatem supernis illuminata radiis credentium corda sequerentur.—(*Serm. 2. de Ascen. c. 2.*)

thou hast believed." That is to say, because thou hast seen Me risen from the dead, thou hast believed Me to be thy LORD and thy GOD^a. But blessed are they who, without having seen Me, believe both that I am risen, and that I am their LORD and their GOD. In this sense, St. Peter, praising the faith and the love of the first Christians, says, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable".

FIRST POINT.

Consider that faith is a virtue infinitely pleasing to the Son of GOD, for three special reasons:—

First, because it hath brought the whole world under His dominion; it hath drawn to it kings, princes, magistrates, and all the nations of the earth: so that Tertullian had good reason to admire the mighty power of the Son of GOD, Who hath subdued the whole world by the Faith in His Gospel^b; and to say that faith is the key by which all the hearts held in captivity by the enemy have been opened to Him^c.

Secondly, because it defends the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST against all the wiles of the devil, and against all the rebellions of corrupt nature. Under the standard of faith all the virtues range themselves in order to combat their enemies. Within this fortress do they retire in order to defend themselves; and as we see that all the heat of the limbs collects round the heart to maintain itself, when the sick man's life is threat-

^a Thomas aliud vidit, aliud credidit; hominem vidit, Deum confessus est.—(*Greg. hom. 26. in Evang. Vide S. Hil. de Trin. vii. 12. ubi pl. S. Aug. Tr. 121. in Joann. fin.*)

^b 1 Pet. i. 8.

^c Qui totum jam orbem Evangelii sui fide cepit.—(*Tert. adv. Jud. c. 12.*)

^d Fide Christi reserata.—(*Ibid. c. 7.*)

ened, so likewise, when the saints are dangerously tempted or afflicted, the whole might of the virtues joineth itself to faith in order to preserve itself, by a noble resistance against every effort of the world and the flesh to destroy them.

Thirdly, because faith causeth the just man to prefer the service of God to his own interests, and despise all for the love of Him. "By faith Moses," as St. Paul saith, "when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward³." In this sense the same Apostle saith "that the Saints have through faith subdued kingdoms," not by conquering them, but by despising them; not by dethroning tyrants, but by enduring their violence, not caring for their threats or their promises; for he is the conqueror, who bringeth off from the battle that which he claims; and whoso hath not that he sought, is conquered. Now what did tyrants seek in persecuting the martyrs? To destroy the faith. Yet thereby was it established! What did the martyrs seek? To glorify Christ, and to gain heaven: they have accomplished both. They have published throughout the world the Divinity of the SAVIOUR of the world, and have gained for themselves an immortal crown⁴. So true is that, "Among Christians, not he is unhappy who suffers wrong, but he who doth it⁵."

Hold this virtue then in special estimation, and

³ Heb. xi. 24. 26.

⁴ S. Aug. c. Epp. 2. Pelag. l. 3. c. 5.

⁵ Apud Christianos non est miser qui patitur, sed qui injuriam facit.—(S. Hieron.)

henceforth be very careful to cultivate it, since without it, "it is impossible to please God." It is the virtue of great souls, whose desires soar where the eye cannot reach. "If," says one of old⁶, "any hold not the true Catholic faith in God, he will, with that his praiseworthy morality, depart out of this life to condemnation."

SECOND POINT.

Consider that faith is a virtue which makes us, in some sense, blessed even in this life, because, as St. Thomas says, "it is a participation in the light of glory, which filleth us with knowledge, love, joy, and holiness, which are the four principal prerogatives of the soul in bliss."

1. The knowledge which it gives us of Divine things is, indeed, much inferior to that of the blessed; but it also greatly exceeds all human knowledge, and all the learning of sages. "What doth not faith find? She attains unto things inaccessible, she discovers things unknown, she grasps things infinite, she takes in the end of all things, yea, further yet, she in a manner enfoldeth in that her vast bosom, eternity itself⁷."

2. Charity cannot subsist without faith; for faith sheweth us how worthy God is of love, and draweth

⁶ Cum suis tamen istis laudabilibus moribus, si non in Deum rectam et Catholicam fidem teneat, de hac vita damnandus abscedit.

This is quoted in the text, as St. Augustine's, in the note as St. Leo's serm. 2, in Ascens., in which sermon it is not. The language, as far as can be judged without the context, appears to imply, that the virtues were only seeming, some hidden sins keeping such persons from the true faith. It is the same statement as in the Athanasian Creed. [Ed.]

⁷ Quid non inveniat fides? attingit inaccessa, deprehendit ignota, comprehendit immensa, apprehendit novissima, ipsam denique æternitatem suo illo vastissimo sinu quodam modo circumeludit.

us to love Him, as the end for which He giveth to us our faith. Faith is the dawn which announces the sun; the flower which precedes the fruit of life, holy action; a good root which draws in the dew of heaven to nourish the fruit⁸; the foundation whereon rests the whole edifice of virtue.

3. The joy it bringeth us is above all price. "For, believing," saith St. Peter, "ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls⁹." Hence, one of old says, that "where faith is perfect, there doth the SAVIOUR of the world teach, watch, and rejoice. There is rest, peace, and the wholesome medicine of all ills¹."

4. Finally, without faith there is no true holiness. For faith subjects us to God; hope raises us to Him; love unites us to Him. "Behold the created Trinity," saith Rupert, "which, as much as is possible, likeneth man to the Trinity Increate, both in holiness and in virtue²." "Without faith nothing is holy, nothing is pure, nothing living. For the just doth live by faith. If then any lose it through the deceitfulness of Satan, he is a living corpse³."

THIRD POINT.

Consider that faith is a virtue which enlightens us

⁸ Fidem florem, fructum actum intellige.—(S. Bern. *Serm.* 51 in *Cont.* § 2.) Fides sic est in anima, sicut radix bona quæ pluviam in fructum ducit.—(S. Aug. *Præf. in Psal.* cxxxix.)

⁹ 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.

¹ Ubi fides integra est, ibi Salvator noster docet, vigilat, et exultat. Ibi requies, ibi tranquillitas, cunctorum est medicina.—[Perhaps S. Maximus, App. S. Ambr. S. 37. fin.]

² De Trin. vi. 19.

³ Nihil sine illa sanctum, nihil castum est, nihil vivum. Justus enim ex fide vivit. Quam qui diabolo decipiente perdidit, vivens mortuus est.—(S. Leo, *Serm.* 4 de *Nativ. fin.*)

in darkness, and which guides us safely through the shades of death to the light of eternal life. "As through faith righteousness is obtained, so also," saith St. Leo, "through true faith, eternal life⁴."

Weigh well these words of CHRIST; "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Blessed are they, because they see not; blessed are they, because they see. Blessed are they, because faith blinds them; blessed are they, because faith enlightens them. Faith is a wondrous mirror, which hides from them what is visible, and shows them what is invisible. For faith closes our eyes to all which is visible to the senses; and opens them to all which is above the senses and human reason. Both are great gifts of God. For "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal⁵."

Things seen deceive and seduce us; therefore, blessed are they who despise them, and turn away from them. Things unseen are of infinite price; therefore, blessed are they who know their value, and have them continually before their eyes. The human mind, says St. Thomas Aquinas, cannot attain there-to by its own strength; "since man, by assenting to that which is of faith, is lifted up above his own nature, this must, of necessity, be through a principle above nature, moving it within, which is God." The more precious this gift, the more rare; for although God giveth it to all believers, few profit by it. For, alas! who thinks of eternity? Who values

⁴ Sicut per fidem iustitia, ita etiam per fidem veram obtineatur vita æterna.—(*Ib.*)

⁵ 2 Cor. iv. 18.

⁶ Cum homo assentiendo iis quæ sunt fidei, elevetur supra naturam suam, oportet quod hoc insit ei ex supernaturali principio interiori movente, quod est Deus.—(*S. Thom.* 2. 2. q. 6, a. 1.)

the treasures of Heaven? Who in earnest seeks God? Strange blindness, which desolates the whole earth, and ruins the greater portion of mankind.

Flee then from this woe, O Christian soul, and henceforth make a better use of thy faith. "Faith" is a mirror of eternity, containing in its boundless compass things past, and present, and to come; so that nothing passeth away to it, nothing is lost to it, nothing is beyond it." Accustom thyself often to look therein. Gaze therein on the past, in order to correct it; the present, in order to regulate it; the future, in order to provide for it betimes. Ascend into Heaven by means of this Divine light, and say within thyself, "Behold the place of my eternal abode, let me make haste to arrive there, lest death come suddenly upon me." Descend into Hell, and say, "Behold the place of eternal punishment prepared for sinners, and which I cannot escape but through the goodness of God. I must then fear to offend Him, lest I make myself unworthy of His Mercy." Place thyself often in the Presence of God; think that He seeth thee, although thou seest Him not. Hereafter thou wilt see Him, and then it will no longer be said to thee, "believe what thou seest not⁷," but rather, "rejoice in that thou seest⁸."

⁷ Fides, velut quoddam æternitatis exemplar, præterita simul et præsentia, ac futura, sinu suo vastissimo comprehendit; ut nihil ei prætereant, nihil pereat, præeat nihil.—(*S. Bern. Serm. 6 in Vigil. Nat. § 4.*)

⁸ Crede quod non vides.—(*S. Aug. Prof. in Psal. xci.*)

⁹ Gaude quia vides.—(*Ibid.*)

**Meditation for the Fifth Sunday in [fourth
after] Easter.**

UPON THE GOSPEL OF THE DAY.

**THE SON OF GOD WARNETH HIS DISCIPLES OF
HIS DEPARTURE, AND PROMISETH THEM THE
HOLY GHOST TO COMFORT THEM.**

“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”—John xvi. 7.

REMARK.

ALTHOUGH the Gospel of to-day does not properly belong to the glorious Life of CHRIST, seeing that it was on the day of the Last Supper that our LORD prepared His Apostles for His departure, yet it is, as you see, closely connected with it. For the Departure of which He speaks comprises three things, namely, His Death, His Separation from His Apostles, and His Return to His Father by His Ascension, which relates to His Life of glory.

And, moreover, the mission of the HOLY GHOST depended upon all this. It was needful that He should die, it was needful that He should separate Himself from His Apostles, and deprive them of His visible Presence; and, finally, it was needful that He should ascend into Heaven before He sent down the HOLY GHOST upon them. It is then yet another mystery in the Glorious Life of CHRIST. Wherefore St. John says, that “the HOLY GHOST was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glori-

fied²." The reason for this dependence will form the subject of our Meditation.

FIRST POINT.

It was needful that the SON of GOD should die before He sent the HOLY GHOST unto us; for the cause must precede the effect. Now, the Death of JESUS CHRIST is the meritorious Cause of all the gifts which we receive from Heaven, and consequently of the sending of the HOLY GHOST, which is the highest Gift of GOD Most High³. It is thus Theophylact explains these words; "If I go not away the COMFORTER will not come unto you." That is, "If I go not by death unto the Father⁴;" or, as Rupert says, "If I go not away, if I drink not of the brook in the way; (that is, if I be not crucified,) the COMFORTER will not come unto you⁵."

Undoubtedly, then, it was for our gain that our LORD should go away, and His Death hath been to us an infinite blessing, since we owe to It no less a Gift than Himself. "Oh! how great is the mercy of our GOD, in giving us the HOLY GHOST. For He giveth a Gift equal to Himself⁶." What returns shouldest thou then not make Him for the many spiritual blessings thou findest in this Treasury! For it is by the communication of the HOLY GHOST that He giveth all the graces which He sheddeth so bountifully upon thee. Every time that He inspireth thee with some good thought or some holy affection, or giveth thee some fresh light, or some

² John vii. 59.

³ Altissimi Donum Dei.—(*Pentecostal Hymn.*)

⁴ Ad loc.

⁵ Si non abiero, si non de torrente in via bibero (id est, si non fuero crucifixus), non veniet ad vos Paracletus.

⁶ Magna Dei nostri misericordia, qui dat nobis Spiritum Sanctum. Donum quippe dat sequale sibi.—(*S. Aug. l. 15 de Trinit.*)

special help in the practice of good works and the undoing of thine evil habits, it is the HOLY GHOST Which cometh to thee, and He cometh to thee through the Merits of JESUS CHRIST. It is the fruit of His Death; it is the price of His Blood; it is the reward of His Labours and Sufferings, which He hath specially applied to thee in preference to many others whom He hath regarded with less favour. Consider how much thou shouldest prize them, and how faithfully thou shouldest correspond to them. Beware of not profiting by these graces; do not this despite to the Holy Spirit, Who bringeth them to thee with Himself; and to the SON of God, Who hath obtained them for thee by His Wounds and by the Death of the Cross.

O Adorable Wounds of my SAVIOUR! which procure for men the peace and the consolation of the HOLY GHOST, and raise the Glory of CHRIST unto the utmost height of Heaven, what reverence and what thanksgiving can I render unto you? Glory be to the FATHER! Glory be to the SON! Glory be to the HOLY GHOST, through my SAVIOUR'S Wounds! How art Thou worthy of all love, O Spirit of JESUS! O FATHER eternal, Who hast given it to us, how Great art Thou! How High! how Mighty! how Glorious art Thou in the Wounds of Thy SON!

SECOND POINT.

It was needful that CHRIST should separate Himself from us, and deprive us of His Presence before the HOLY SPIRIT came to us, in order to make us capable of receiving so precious and so excellent a Gift. This is the meaning which Saint Augustine and Saint Bernard give to these words: "If I go not away, the COMFORTER will not come unto you." Wherefore? because ye are too much attached to My Bodily Presence, and grieve too much for My

departure. "If ye give not what ye love, ye will not have that which ye desire⁷." What did the Apostles love? The sensible Presence of their Master. What did they desire? The HOLY GHOST. Is there an opposition then between the love of the SAVIOUR and the coming of the HOLY GHOST, Who descendeth but that He may make Him beloved? The Apostles loved CHRIST so tenderly, that they could not endure His absence, nor even think of His departure without extreme sorrow. Is there aught therein which could make them incapable of receiving the HOLY GHOST? Can anything be more reasonable than to love so good a Master? Can anything be more just than to be saddened at His absence? True it is: nothing is more holy than the love of CHRIST. But the love which the Apostles bore Him was as yet not sufficiently spiritual, nor withdrawn from the senses; it was too human, too sensible, and moreover, it had some admixture of self-love. "They loved in a manner, and they loved not;" says St. Bernard, "they loved tenderly, but not wisely. Their love was opposed to what was for their salvation⁸," because they could not endure to lose sight of their Master, by reason of their great affection for His Presence. And therefore He said to them: "If I go not away, the COMFORTER will not come unto you." "I will that ye love Me no longer with an imperfect and human love, or, content with that milk, ever long to remain children. Unless I withdraw from you the tender food, wherewith I have sustained you hitherto, ye will not hunger after solid food. If in a carnal way ye cleave to the Flesh, ye cannot

⁷ Si non dederitis quod amatis, non habebitis quod desideratis.—(S. Bern. *Serm.* [8] *de Pentec.*)

⁸ Diligebant quodammodo, et non diligebant. Diligebant dulciter, sed minus prudenter. Dilectio eorum contra salutem eorum.—(S. Bern. *Serm.* 20 in *Cant.* § 5.)

receive the Spirit¹." "If I withdraw not My Bodily Presence, I cannot teach you what spiritual love is. If ye cease not to see Me with the bodily eye, ye will never learn to love Me with a spiritual love¹." In a word, "Ye cannot receive the Spirit whilst ye continue to know CHRIST after the flesh²." But if this be indeed true, who will not fear to attach himself to creatures, since even the affection which the Apostles had for the Bodily Presence of JESUS CHRIST was a hindrance to the reception of the HOLY GHOST?

O how true is it, that one disorderly affection, how trifling soever, brings no small hurt to the soul! It takes away its peace. "Whosoever a man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself³." It hinders him from uniting himself more closely to God, because, as Saint Chrysostome says⁴, "The more thou lovest other things, the less thou lovest God." What thou givest to the creature, thou takest from the Creator. Finally, the love of creatures hinders peace of mind; since "through their loss, sorrow must needs cut as deep, as love unduly cleaved." Is it then so light an ill to be deprived of such great blessings? "From these sorrows he is the safest, who has least loved outward things, or has them as though he had them not⁵."

¹ Nolo me carnaliter adhuc diligatis, et illo lacte contenti semper infantes esse cupiatis. Si alimenta tenera, quibus vos alui, non subtraxero, solidum cibum non esurietis. Si carni carnaliter adhæseritis, capaces spiritus non eritis.—(S. Aug. Tract 94 in Joan. § 4.)

² Si corpus non subtraho, quis sit amor spiritus non ostendo. Nisi desideritis me carnaliter cernere, nunquam me discetis spiritualiter amare.—(S. Greg. dial. ii. 38.)

³ Non potestis capere spiritum, quamdiu secundum carnem perastitis nosse Christum.—(S. Aug. l. c.)

⁴ De Imit. Christi, i. 6.

⁵ S. Chrys. hom. 42 in Matt.

⁶ Tantum necesse est ex earum amissione urat dolor, quan-

O HOLY GHOST, Who art come into the world to teach us eternal truths, engrave this truth so strongly in my heart, that it may never be effaced: "It is sometimes but a small thing that hindereth and hideth Grace from us; at least, if any thing can be called small, and not rather a weighty matter, which obstructeth so great a good. If thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou wilt have thy desire⁶."

. THIRD POINT.

It was needful that CHRIST should raise Himself from the earth, and should ascend the throne of His Glory, before He sent down to us the HOLY GHOST; for very important reasons.

1. The HOLY GHOST proceedeth from the SON in His Divinity, not in His Humanity. Now the special abode of the Divinity is Heaven. It was therefore befitting that He should ascend into Heaven before He sent Him to us.

2. If the HOLY SPIRIT had descended whilst JESUS CHRIST was still on earth, it might have been thought that He had not sent Him, but only that He had obtained Him by His prayers. And

3. The HOLY GHOST was coming into the world to proclaim the Glory of CHRIST, and to make known all the Mysteries of His life, amongst which His Ascension, and His Session at the Right Hand of His FATHER are among the most important. It was needful then that He should ascend into Heaven before He sent Him on earth, that He might exercise this office. And further:

4. The SON of GOD willed to establish a wondrous

tum hæserit amor. A quo dolore tanto est quisque securior, quanto ea vel minus amaverit, vel tanquam non habens habuerit.—(*S. Aug. de C. D. xxi. 26.*)

⁶ De Imit. Christi, iv. 15.

intercourse betwixt Heaven and earth. To this end, He raised His Body from earth to Heaven, in order to send down His Spirit from Heaven to earth, and by this means to make all things one for ever.

5. Finally, JESUS CHRIST desired to "draw all men unto Himself," as He had promised after He had been lifted up from the earth. In order then to fulfil His Promise, it was needful that He should ascend into the Highest Heaven, that He might draw all hearts thither; and, that He might draw them thither, it was needful that He should send the HOLY SPIRIT, Who is Love Itself, and Who can love none, and make others love none, but ALMIGHTY GOD and JESUS CHRIST, His SON.

Come, HOLY GHOST, and fill the hearts of the faithful, and kindle therein the fire of Thy Love. Come and reprove the world because it loveth not the SAVIOUR CHRIST. Come and "convince it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because it believeth not in" JESUS CHRIST after having given it such wonderful proofs of His Divinity; "of righteousness," because being seated at the Right Hand of God, it is manifest that He is the Holy of Holies, and yet the life of the men of this world is still opposed to His Example and His teaching: "of judgment," because having judged the prince of darkness and banished him from the earth, sinners still make themselves his slaves and establish anew his tyranny, not fearing to incur the same judgment with him, and make themselves companions in his punishment, even as they are partners in his rebellion and his crimes.

**Meditation for the Fifth Monday after
Easter.**

ON THE LOVE OF JESUS.

**JESUS APPEARS TO SEVERAL OF HIS DISCIPLES
BY THE SEA OF TIBERIAS, AND GIVES SUC-
CESS TO THEIR FISHING.**

“Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall
find.”—John xxi. 6.

REMARK. •

AFTER passing the period of the Paschal Feast at Jerusalem, the Apostles returned into Galilee, their own country, in obedience to the command of their MASTER, and for greater security from the Jews. As they were poor, and lived only by their labour, Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael, the two sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples, being together, Peter saith unto them, “I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered Him, No. And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.” For it was “full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broke.” St. John adds, that this was “the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His

Disciples, after that He was risen from the dead :” that is, the third time of which he gives us the relation ; or, probably, the third time that He showed Himself to several disciples at once.

This miraculous draught of fishes resembles that of which St. Luke speaks, but with this difference, that the one event took place after the Resurrection, the other before it: in the one were only “great fishes ;” in the other, little ones also, which were cast back into the sea : “in that draught, so many were taken, that the nets were broken; in this, many were taken, yet was not the net broken. But who knows not that the good are designated by the right, the bad by the left? That draught, then, in which it is not specially directed on which side the net should be cast, designates the present Church, which gathereth good and bad together, not choosing which to draw, because it knoweth not which to choose. But this draught, after the Resurrection, was on the right only ; because the Church of the Elect alone, which hath no part in sinister deeds, attaineth to see the brightness of His Glory. In that fishing, through the multitude of fishes, the net is broken ; since now, together with the elect, so many reprobates also enter into the confession of the Faith, who rend the Church itself by heresies. But in this fishing, there are both many and great fish taken, yet is the net not broken ; because the Holy Church of the Elect, resting in the unbroken peace of its AUTHOR, is no longer rent by any dissensions’.”

All the circumstances of this Appearance are full of mystery, and calculated to make known to us the surpassing Love of Jesus, and the Attributes of that Love ; Its Benevolence and Lovingkindness, Its Clear-sightedness, Its Fervour and Activity, Its Ten-

⁷ S. Greg. hom. 24 in Evang. § 3 from S. Aug. Tract 122. in Joh. See Catena Aurea ad loc. p. 618, Oxf. Tr.

derness, Its Generosity and Patience, Its Faithfulness and Watchfulness.

FIRST POINT.

JESUS comes, in the time of their need, to comfort and help His Disciples. This is the first proof of His Benevolence and Lovingkindness.

They had gone a fishing on the sea of Tiberias, which is, properly speaking, only a pool, or lake of Galilee, otherwise called the Lake of Gennesar, or Gennesaret, through which the Jordan passes before falling into the Dead Sea. This lake represents the world, which is in truth but a pool, or, at most, an arm of the sea, on which we float into Eternity. For we can only properly call Heaven or Hell a sea ; because, as "all the rivers run into the sea", and are gathered there from all parts, so all good things are collected in Heaven, and all evils in Hell. The world, which is between the two, is but a mixture of good and evil, whose extent, like its duration, is as nothing, when compared with an Eternity of bliss or woe. Men fish in this pool, because they are poor and hungry ; but the greater part, like the Apostles, take nothing, because they fish during the night, which makes their labours vain. Four sorts of persons principally labour in the darkness of the night.

1. Those who are in a state of sin, and have not recourse to penitence. For sin is a fearful night, depriving us of the light of sanctifying grace, without which none can attain eternal happiness.

2. Those who, in their actions and employments, seek themselves, not regarding the Glory of God or their own salvation. For this their wrong aim is a deep night, spreading a thick darkness around all their

* Eccles. i. 7.

actions, according to what our LORD says in the Gospel: "The light of the body is the eye; therefore, when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body is full of darkness".

3. Those who trust in their industry, and presume on their own strength. For presumption is a dangerous night, tempting spirits blinded by vanity and self-love, among hidden precipices.

4. Those who forsake obedience, to follow their own will. For obedience is like the pillar in the desert, lighting us, and showing us the way to Heaven. Who follows it not walks in darkness, and is in danger of never reaching the Holy Land.

Avoid these four faults; and if thou wouldest labour with profit for thine own salvation and for that of others, seek diligently purity of conscience, purity of heart, the habit of obedience, and distrust of thyself: these will constrain thee to take refuge in CHRIST, without Whom thou canst do nothing¹. "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase": and He only can bless our labours.

SECOND POINT.

JESUS speaks to His disciples with great gentleness. "Children," says He, "have ye any meat?" This, again, shows that His Love is full of Benevolence and Thoughtfulness. This good Master treats His servants as His own children, with fatherly kindness. Seeing them wearied without any fruit of their labour, and hungry without any food for their support, He is moved with compassion towards them. Therefore He asks them if they have any meat, and they answer, No. This was what He

⁰ Luke xi. 34.

¹ John xv. 5.

² 1 Cor.:iii. 7.

expected from them ; He was not ignorant of their necessity, but He would have them acknowledge and confess it themselves, that they might be the better prepared to receive the favour which He was ready to confer upon them.

Imagine that He deals thus with thee, and that He says to thee, My son, hast thou humility ? hast thou patience ? hast thou devotion ? hast thou the grace of obedience ? These are what thou must cast out thy net for, by which thy soul must be nourished, for which thou must spend thy labour. " My meat," He says³, " is to do the will of Him that sent Me." " Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you⁴." Answer then with simplicity and sincerity of heart, that thou hast none of these things, but that thou dost look for them from His clemency. Say unto Him, " LORD, Thou art the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort⁵, and I am a destitute, hungry, and weary child, whom no created thing can satisfy or relieve : from Thee Alone do I expect rest and consolation." But remember, that His gifts are only for those who labour. " The Seraphim stand," says St. Bernard⁶, " for charity never faileth. They stand, hanging in amazed contemplation of Him Who sitteth on the Throne ; they stand in eternal unchangeableness and in unchangeable charity. Thou, ungodly one, essayest to sit, therefore thy feet were moved, and thy footsteps slipped. It is the Son Alone Who sitteth on the Throne, the LORD of Sabaoth, judging all in tranquil majesty. The Trinity Alone sitteth upon His Throne, for He ' Alone hath immortality ;' with Him Alone is neither change nor shadow of turning.

³ John iv. 34.

⁴ John vi. 27.

⁵ 2 Cor. i. 3.

⁶ In Dom. 1 Nov. Sermon. 3, de verb. Is. fin.

The Seraphim stand⁷, unchangeable indeed, but in their own degree, not as compared with Him. They stand, stretching themselves forth, and reaching unto Him, into Whom they 'desire to look.' He who presumes to sit⁸, desired to be sufficient for himself; whence to this day he ever hungers after evil, for this alone he hath from himself. Yet although he hath an evil delight in evil, yet not even in this shall he ever suffice unto himself. So then the Supreme Trinity Alone sitteth; for It Alone hath Its Being within Itself; It Is in Itself, and therefore Alone truly Is: It Alone hath Its Being within Itself, It Alone needeth no one; It Alone sufficeth to Itself."

THIRD POINT.

JESUS bade His disciples to cast their nets "on the right side of the ship," and He blessed their obedience with a miraculous success. Hear these words with deep reverence: "Cast thy net on the right side of the ship." They are spoken by Him Who is "the wonderful Counsellor".⁹ He still daily performs this office of love in our souls by His inspirations, and by the Divine guidance which He gives us for our greater perfection, and for the salvation of others. "Cast the net of thine intention, of thy desire, of thy love," says He, "on the right side, and not on the left." That is:

1. On the side of grace and not of nature. Beware of going to thine occupations, thy duties, thy business, thy visits, thy diversions, through natural inclination. Let grace always prevent the movements of nature, and regulate the whole course of thy life.

2. On the side of Heaven, not of earth. Let not temporal interests predominate over spiritual. Govern

⁷ Isaiah vi. 2.

⁸ Isaiah xiv. 12—14.

⁹ Isaiah ix. 6.

thyself by the eternal rules. Live as an inhabitant of Heaven, who is only here through necessity.

3. On the side of the Cross, not of sensual delights, or even of spiritual consolations. The Cross is the portion of the Elect, whom the Saviour of the world will set on His right Hand at the Day of Judgment, to judge the reprobate. Unhappy he, to whom the Son of God shall say at the hour of death, "Thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things¹," "thou hast chosen them for thy portion; expect nothing more."

4. Lastly, on the side of God, not of the creature. Seek not to please man; do nothing to be esteemed of man: look singly to God. Examine into thy intentions: seek the Supreme Good, seek the salvation of souls, seek spiritual advancement, seek the Glory of JESUS CHRIST. In Him "thou wilt find" the Fulness of all good. But if thou cast the net on the side of the perishing goods, of worldly honours, and temporal prosperity, thou wilt find nothing but emptiness and hollowness: for all created things are nothing. Thou wilt not find there what thou seekest, thy nets will enclose only the air which passes through them, the water which runs by them; and after toiling all the night, the only reward of thy labours will be weariness and grief, because thou hast "forsaken the Fountain of living waters²" for "dry cisterns," truth for vanity, everything for nothing.

Alas! how many good things do we lose by our own fault? What might we not do for the Glory of God, for our spiritual advancement, and for the good of souls, if we were careful to purify our intentions! God requireth not of us greater or more difficult things than we now do; it would be sufficient

¹ Luke xvi. 25.

² Jer. ii. 13.

to do the very same in obedience, in charity, from some other virtuous motive. Could anything be easier or sweeter? Yet we lose so great an advantage by our own negligence, for want of a little more care and application.

O ye sons of men, heavy of heart and inclinations! "how long will ye have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing³?"

Meditation for the Fifth Tuesday after Easter.

THE LOVE OF JESUS IS A CLEAR-SIGHTED LOVE.

JESUS MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN AT THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the LORD."—John xxi. 7.

FIRST POINT.

JESUS shows Himself to His Disciples without their knowing Him. "When⁴ the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was JESUS." It was not the darkness of the night which hindered them from knowing Him, for He waited till day to show Himself, because the night of His Passion being ended, the brightness of day was more conformable to the state of His Resurrection. Neither was it His silence, for He spoke to them with great gentleness, and a Master or a Friend is easily recognised by His speech. Neither was it that He merely passed by them, show-

³ Psalm iv. 2.

⁴ John xxi. 7.

ing Himself from afar, for He "stood on the shore," from which they were at no great distance; and if He did not walk upon the sea, it was because He would teach them, by remaining on the firm land, the unchangeable state of Immortality.

Why, then, did they not know Him at first? Because, to recognize Him we need an especial grace, and a particular illumination, and this He does not give to all, for He does not find in all that purity of heart, and that intentness of mind which are requisite, in order to profit by so precious a gift. "For to know Thee," says the Wise man, "is perfect righteousness," and "the root of immortality⁵."

Alas! how few apply themselves to this Divine Science, and study to know Him in every state of Suffering and of Glory, and in the whole conduct of His Love, so as to say in all times and in all places, "It is the LORD;" He It is Who permits this sickness, this humiliation, these troublesome and unforeseen circumstances. He It is Who speaks to me by the lips of this preacher, or this superior, warning me of my duty. He It is Who does, Who permits, Who ordains this or that; in these events I look to no second causes, "the will of the flesh," or "the will of man⁶," but the good Pleasure of God. Such is the conduct of those who are born of His Divine Spirit. These can say in all that befalls them; I prize all that comes from Him; it is enough to know that He sends it. I love all that makes known to me His Will, His mysterious Sufferings, His Abasement, His Greatness; whether He is shown to me lying a helpless Infant in His Cradle, brought as a sinner to Circumcision, taking refuge as a fugitive in Egypt, working at a trade in Nazareth, "led out" a Solitary into the Wilderness, treated as a madman

⁵ Wisd. xv. 3.

⁶ John i. 13.

before Herod, an impostor before Pilate, scourged as a slave at the Pillar, a malefactor and public victim on the Cross, or lying dead in the Sepulchre. I esteem Him no less in all these humiliations, than when He appears as a victorious and triumphant King on the day of His Entry into the city of Jerusalem, as a Prophet delighting all by His Discourse, as a Worker of miracles, commanding even storms and tempests, walking on the waters, casting out devils, raising the dead, and Himself triumphing over death by ascending from the Sepulchre to Heaven. For everywhere and always He is equally "my LORD and my GOD."

O my soul, be thou one of the small number who are enlightened by Divine Love. Apply thyself to the science of the Saints. Accustom thyself to see GOD in all things. Be not so careless of thy perfection that it may be said of thee, as of these disciples, "They knew not that it was JESUS." An elect soul must not be unacquainted with its SAVIOUR. Such ignorance is the source of all our disorders and of all our misfortunes.

SECOND POINT.

JESUS makes Himself known to the disciple whom He loves, and through him to all the others. The cause of this privilege is the Love of the Master and the purity of the disciple. "Of the disciples of JESUS," says St. Jerome^s, "he only who is a virgin knows the King of virgins." The purity of St. John's heart caused him to be loved by the SON of GOD, and the pure discernment of his mind gave him a great advantage in learning to know Him. Therefore, seeing this miraculous draught of fishes, he immediately understood Who was its Author, he

^s Solus virgo Virginem agnoscit.—(*S. Hieron. c. Jovinian. i. 26.*)

alone knew that CHRIST was present, and he told the others so without hesitation. "He first seeth JESUS, Whom he loves, because the eye of love is always the most keen-sighted, and because one who is beloved has a quicker and finer sense". Dost thou desire then to know JESUS CHRIST? Make thyself loved by Him. Dost thou desire that He shall love thee? Love purity, and unite purity with charity. These two virtues are the eyes of the soul, from which God hides nothing. "He¹ containeth both what is clear, and what is hidden in the Divine Word, who in action retaineth charity." This is the first eye of the soul. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God²." This is the second, whereof St. Augustine excellently says³, "If we wish to see God, let us cleanse the eye whereby God can be seen. As, if we would see this sun, we must cleanse the eye of the body, whereby light may be seen. And where is that eye, wherewith God may be seen? Hear the Gospel. 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'"

St. Leo is in perfect agreement with St. Augustine⁴. "A defiled eye cannot behold the brightness

⁹ Primus qui diligitur videt, quia semper amoris oculus acutius intuetur, et semper vivacius qui diligitur, sentit.—(*S. Chrysost. Serm. 78.*)

¹ Ille tenet et quod patet et quod latet in divinis sermonibus, qui charitatem tenet in moribus.—(*S. Aug. Serm. 350, de Charit. ii. § 2.*)

² Matt. v. 8.

³ Volentes ergo videre Deum, oculum quo Deus videri potest, purgemus. Quemadmodum si solem istum videre vellemus, oculum corporis purgaremus unde videri lux potest. Et ubi est iste oculus quo Deus videre potest? audi Evangelium: Beati mundi corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt.—(*S. Aug. [Tract. 7, in Cant. 10] simil. Serm. 117, § 15, et passim.*)

⁴ Splendorem enim veri luminis sordens acies videre non potest, et quod est jucunditas nitidis mentibus, hoc est pœna maculosis.—(*S. Leo, Serm. 95, de gradib. ascens. ad beat.*)

of the true light, and what to pure minds is joy, to the defiled is pain." "Turn we then aside from the mists of earthly vanities, and let the inward eyes be cleansed from all defilement of iniquity, that the calm, pure gaze may feed on that exceeding sight of God⁵." "How secret are Thy ways, O God; Thou only Great, Who sittest silent on high, and by an unwearied law sheddest penal blindness upon lawless desires⁶." Deliver me, LORD, from this blindness. "Make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy Presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me⁷."

THIRD POINT.

JESUS makes Himself known to His beloved disciple by the miracle of the draught of fishes, and by the outward and inward signs which He gives him of His Presence. "For⁸ great had been the difficulty in this fishing, that, when the Master came, great might be the height of their admiration." By this St. John clearly perceived that it was JESUS, and said without hesitation, "It is the LORD." It is reasonable to believe that the SON of GOD illumined him with a special light, which enabled him to discern Him by His Features, His Voice, His Attitude, His wonted Movements, the Majesty of His Person, and the sensation of love and joy within his own heart. For he was the beloved of Eternal Wisdom,

⁵ Declinentur igitur terrenarum caligines vanitatum, et ab omni squalore iniquitatis oculi tergantur interiores, ut serenius intuitus tanta Dei visione pascatur.—(*Ibid.*)

⁶ Quam tu secretus es habitans in excelsis, in silentio, Deus, solus magnus, lege infatigabili spargens penales cecitates super illicitas cupiditates!—(*S. Aug. Confess.* i. 18.)

⁷ Psalm li. 10, 11.

⁸ Facta est enim piscationis magna difficultas, ut magistro veniente fieret admirationis magna sublimitas.—(*S. Greg. Hom.* 24, in *Evang.* § 3.)

Who had drawn from the well-spring of His Bosom the spirit of understanding, and He could not then fail to recognize in the bright day of His new and glorious Life that LORD, Whom he had seen, followed, and loved in the darkness of His ignominious Death on Calvary. It is thus that the Divine Spouse ordinarily makes Himself known to the pure and innocent. And the idea which He gives them of the infinite Beauty of His Divinity, and of the overpowering Attractions of His Humanity, is so full of charms, that they can feel nothing but contempt for created things; and far from being dazzled by human splendour, or taking the creature for the Creator, they say at once, "This is not the LORD, this is not my God, I see not here the Loveliness of that JESUS, Whose Image is stamped so deeply upon my soul."

His inward Voice is so sweet and powerful, that the Saints who converse familiarly with Him, discern at once His Mind and His Approach. "My sheep hear My Voice⁹."

But they know Him above all by the motion of His Hand, that is, by His Actions. For, although He often hides His Face, and does not always make His Voice to be heard, He never deprives them of the assistance of His Hand, without which they could not abide one moment. By the Power, the Skill, and the Goodness of this Divine Hand, they know from whence their energy comes. For He carries them by His Power, and bears them onward to do deeds above nature. He forms them by His Skill in so many different ways, that Infinite Wisdom Alone can comprehend them; and whether He wounds or caresses, His touches are so tender, that they equally show His Goodness, since He wounds but to heal; and if He cause pain, it is only to deliver from endless misery.

⁹ John x. 27.

Lastly ; His Bounty heaps so many favours on them, that they cannot be ignorant Who is their Author, nor grow weary of praising Him, and of saying unceasingly, "It is the LORD." It is from Thee, my God, that I receive this peace, this light, this strength, and this blessing. "Thou openest Thine Hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness¹." "Yea, Thy Mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever, despise not then the works of Thine own Hands²."

Meditation for the Fifth Wednesday after Easter.

THE LOVE OF JESUS IS A FERVENT AND ACTIVE LOVE.

JESUS HAVING MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS DISCIPLES, ST. PETER CASTS HIMSELF INTO THE SEA, IN ORDER TO GO THE MORE QUICKLY TO HIS MASTER.

"When Simon Peter heard that it was the LORD, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked), and did cast himself into the sea."—John xxviii. 7.

SUBJECT.

St. Chrysostome remarks³, that in this occurrence "St. John and St. Peter shew each their own peculiar character. One had more elevation of spirit, the other more fervour ; the one was more clear-sighted, the other more vehement. Therefore John knew Jesus first, and Peter went first to Him." The first is the pattern of the contemplative, whose love is

¹ Psalm cxlv. 16.

² Psalm cxxxviii. 8.

³ Hom. 87. in Joh. § 2.

clear-sighted, peaceable, and joyful; the other, of those evangelic labourers, whose love must be fervent and active. This is the subject of the following meditation.

FIRST POINT.

When St. Peter heard that it was the LORD who stood on the shore, "he girt his coat unto him," before casting himself into the sea, that he might go to Him in a more fitting and reverent manner.

This is the first duty of a fervent disciple of CHRIST, of one who is desirous of employing himself in good works, and of labouring profitably for the salvation of souls. For if he would follow JESUS, and succeed in his undertakings, he is bound above all things to put on Christian Graces, which may be called the livery or badge of his Master's service.

Thus the Angel who delivered St. Peter from the prison, said, before setting him at liberty, "Cast thy garment about thee and follow me ⁴." Had St. Peter neglected this direction, far from recovering his liberty, and returning to His Apostolic functions, he would have lost his life on the day following. But it is not merely an Angel, but JESUS CHRIST Who says to thee, "Cast thy garment about thee, and follow Me." Put on My Virtues, My Humility, My Patience, My Gentleness, My Constancy, and My Obedience. It is at once for thy interest and thy Master's Glory that thou obey Him. "Put ye on the LORD JESUS CHRIST ⁵." Weigh well these words, they are powerful motives, constraining thee to clothe thyself with His Mind, His Feelings, and His Virtues.

1. "It is thy Master." Not a stranger, but thy Supreme and lawful LORD. Thou must then wear His Livery, thou must not appear unclothed, nor walk before Him without being clothed, as the Dignity of

⁴ Acts xii. 8.

⁵ Rom. xiii. 11.

so great a King requires. It would be an insult to Him.

2. "It is JESUS." The office of SAVIOUR, expressed by this Name, demands as much of us. For since He has been pleased to put on our humanity, and to clothe Himself with our miseries, in order to save us, it is most just, that in order to be saved, we should put on His Holiness, and bear His Mark.

3. "It is CHRIST," that is, the Anointed of the LORD, of whom the royal prophet speaks in these terms, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; wherefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. All Thy Garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces⁶." For what are the perfumes of the Spouse which thou must offer, and the garments thou must put on? They are the sweetness of Charity, and the bitterness of mortification. Thy Christian profession obliges thee to it, that thou mayest, by thy virtuous and exemplary life be, as St. Paul says, "A sweet savour in CHRIST⁷;" for otherwise thou wilt have no part in His Glory, having none in His Sufferings and in His Virtues.

SECOND POINT.

When St. Peter had girt on his coat, he cast himself immediately into the sea, to arrive more quickly at the shore where his Master stood. He feared neither danger nor trouble, because his ardent desire of approaching Him Whom He loved, allowed him to think nothing difficult, short of the desired end.

So must the fervent disciple of CHRIST act: he must spare nothing, fear nothing, when called upon to serve God. "The fervent," says an excellent

⁶ Psalm xlv. 8, 9.

⁷ 2 Cor. ii. 15.

interpreter⁸, "cast themselves into dangers, as St. Peter cast himself into the sea, and expose themselves to all manner of labours and sufferings for the love of CHRIST. The lukewarm and cold fear that every brook will drown them." Fervent Love undertakes heroic and difficult works, without a command; an indifferent heart lacks resolution for the easiest things, even when urged to them by duty. "The slothful man saith, There is a Lion in the way⁹," I fear to risk myself, I will not go out. The fervent man fears neither Lion nor Dragon. By the power of love he can do great things. "Adam had not strength to resist temptation," says St. Bernard¹, "because he had not fervour." Be fervent, and thou wilt be strong enough to conquer every enemy, and to overcome every obstacle to thy perfection.

It is not known with certainty in what manner St. Peter went to his master. St. Chrysostome says that he swam. Cajetan thinks that he walked in the water, because the sea was not deep near the shore. However this might be, his fervour had the desired effect; he reached the land before the others, and was the first with JESUS. Follow his example, and thou wilt soon arrive at union with God. Thou wilt pass through the waters², and, if it is needful, the ardour of thy love will be irresistible, and will make thee all-powerful. Avoid, then, slackness or coldness in His service, and engrave deeply in thy heart these words of the Venerable Bede³. "Without a fervid earnest-

⁸ Vide Barradium, tom. iv. l. ix. c. 2.

⁹ Proverbs xxvi. 13.

¹ Non habuit fortitudinem, quia non habuit fervorem.—(S. Bern. Serm. i. de S. And. § 9.)

² Isaiah xliii. 2.

³ Nisi mentis contentio ferbeat, unda mundi non vincitur, per quam anima semper ad ima revocatur.—(Beda.)

ness of soul, never wilt thou surmount the waves of the world, which ever strive to sink the soul down into the very abyss."

THIRD POINT.

While St. Peter approached his LORD, by swimming towards Him, "the other disciples came by a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes."

This denotes to us two sorts of persons who go to CHRIST, and who aim at perfection. The first are fervent and courageous, and having much fire, they cannot remain in the ship; they seem to go beyond themselves, and to cast themselves boldly into the sea of sufferings, that they may win CHRIST Crucified, in Whom their soul dwells more than in the body which it animates.

The second class of persons are gentle and peaceful, always seeking submission to the Will of God. They rest, as it were, in the vessel of Divine Providence, banqueting on their MASTER's favours, when He is with them, and, when He is absent, looking in patience and silence for His return. They say, with St. François de Sales, "If He comes, I will receive Him with joy; but if He comes not, I will not rush too eagerly after Him: whether He draws nearer to me, or draws me nearer to Him, I will await His Call or His Approach." If they have to pass through privations and sufferings, they do not cast themselves into the sea, like St. Peter; but, like Jonah⁴, suffer themselves to be cast in; disposing neither of their own persons, lives, honours, nor fortunes: these they leave in the Hands of the LORD, to be dealt with according to His good Pleasure.

O most sweet SAVIOUR! I am Thine Alone: do

⁴ Jonah i. 12.

with me what Thou wilt; and cast me into the sea of sorrow and humiliation, if it be Thy Will that I glorify Thee there. I confess that my love for Thee is weak, that I cannot yet die to myself; "my life is whole within me," my soul centres in self. Do Thou, then, draw her to Thee by Thy Grace; give her courage to leave the ship, to come out of herself, and plunge into the vast sea of Thy sufferings; so that, in the end, she may be wholly absorbed in the Infinite Ocean of Thy Divinity!

Meditation for the Fifth Thursday after Easter.

THE LOVE OF JESUS IS FULL OF TENDERNESS.

JESUS PREPARES FOR THE REFRESHMENT OF HIS DISCIPLES, AFTER THE LABOUR OF FISHING.

"Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine."—John xxi. 12.

SUBJECT.

As soon as the Apostles "were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread," which had been prepared by their MASTER for their refreshment. St. Cyril says that He brought the fish from the lake by His unspeakable Power. St. Chrysostome thinks that He created the fish and bread out of nothing. It might be, that He produced them miraculously from some other substance. Yet, before calling them to dine, He required them to bring of the fishes which they had themselves caught. Then Simon Peter, in his zeal, "wen up, and drew

^s 2 Sam. i. 9.

the net to land, full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Then Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the LORD. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise." It may be supposed that He ate with them, as before on Easter Day. Wherefore St. Peter says, in the Acts of the Apostles, we "did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead⁶." All the circumstances of this feast show us, first, the Goodness with which our LORD treats His faithful servants; secondly, the way in which they should receive His Favours; lastly, what they must do to reply to His Love, and to make themselves worthy of them.

FIRST POINT.

Consider the Goodness with which the SON of GOD treats His Disciples, and the Feast which He provides for them, after they have toiled all the night.

1. He prepares food for them Himself, and as soon as they are come to land, they see "a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread;" and all this done by the Hand of their MASTER.

This shows His Care for the spiritual sustenance of those who labour for Him, that He thus nourishes them with "angels' food⁷," and so "heaps" upon them the live "coals" of His Divine Tenderness, that their whole hearts become fused in It, and burn and glow with the intensity of the Heavenly Flame.

2. He invites them to His Feast.

"Come and dine," He says, with a gentleness

⁶ Acts x. 41.

⁷ Psalm lxxviii. 26.

⁸ Proverbs xii. 20.

which delights them, and fills them with holy gladness.

This is to show us that, while zeal for His Glory keeps us employed in His Service, and in the practice of good works, He prepares for us in Heaven a royal Feast, worthy of His Greatness, Where He will Himself invite us, in the first dawn of a blessed Eternity, when we shall be nourished on the Bread of His Divine and Human Nature, and filled with immortal joys. "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God⁹." "Lord, evermore give us this Bread¹." "O Good Jesu, hear me. In the hour of my death call me, and place me near to Thee, that with Thy Angels I may praise thee for endless ages."

3. Not contented with inviting His Disciples to eat with Him, He serves them Himself. "He taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise." These seem to be two very common sorts of food; but being blessed by His Hand, they are so changed that the most delicate meats cannot approach to their sweetness.

O how gloriously, how deliciously, is that soul feasted, which is nourished with the Eucharistic Bread on earth, and with the Bread of the Divine Essence in Heaven. It is not by variety or multitude of meats that we are sustained: One Alone suffices for time and for Eternity.

O heart of man, that troublest and disquietest thyself in seeking the creature, thinking to find in it thy satisfaction and thy repose, how dost thou deceive thyself! Thou canst not find good, save in God Alone, Who is the Supreme Good, Who contains within Himself all good. Leave all, then, and thou shalt find all. Empty thy heart of the crea-

⁹ Luke xiv. 15.

¹ John vi. 34.

ture, and God shall fill it with the Fulness of His Divinity.

SECOND POINT.

Consider the demeanour of the disciples towards their Master at this admirable Banquet.

1. "There are seven of them," says St. Gregory, "to denote that they only, who are full of the seven-fold Gifts of the HOLY GHOST, shall be with Him in the eternal Refreshment." And they only, who have the gifts of the SPIRIT, are welcome at the Holy Eucharist. It is during Communion that our "acts" of faith, and love, and hope, must be practised, if we would obtain solid nourishment from this ineffable Food.

2. The Presence of their Master overwhelms them with joy; His Countenance delights them; His Voice melts their heart with sweetness; His great Power, shown by the miracles which He works, fills them with admiration. They are transported out of themselves by the Tenderness with which He condescends to them.

3. Yet "none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the LORD." This is enough to fill them with reverence. They content themselves with adoring Him, admiring Him, and silently enjoying the sweetness of His Looks and of His Converse.

Thus do faithful souls receive the Caresses of CHRIST. The knowledge of Him and His loving Familiarity humble them and keep them modest; and very far from growing incautious or presuming upon His favours, these serve only to amaze and subdue them. So that they dare not even question Him, or inquire into His Works and His Dealings with them, "knowing that it is the LORD," Whose Person, Actions, and Proceedings, require veneration

and love, not vain researches and curious enquiries. The nearer they approach to God, the more deeply do they reverence Him. And if sometimes they "ask Him, Who art Thou?" this is not through a presumptuous wish to penetrate into His Awful Glory, but through their ardent desire to know Him better, that they may love and praise Him more, and to be humbled in their own sight by the vision of His Greatness, and of their own nothingness. O my God, if the Powers of Heaven tremble in Thy Presence, if the Seraphim fold their wings to veil themselves from the dazzling splendour of Thy Majesty, how shall I dare lift up mine eyes to gaze on Thee? how open my lips to speak to Thee? how draw near Thy Throne, that am but a vile worm, without wings to rise, or feet to run unto Thee? What is my strength in Thy Presence, and what remains to me in my wretchedness, but to drag myself a miserable reptile to Thy Feet, there, worthless as I am, to sing with Thy Angels, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD of Hosts²." Be then each faculty in abeyance, all my senses mute, and let my heart alone speak; saying with one of the most humble of Thy Servants³, "O LORD my God! Thou art to me whatsoever is good. And who am I that I should dare speak to Thee? I am Thy poorest, meanest servant, and a most vile worm, much more poor and contemptible than I can or dare express. Yet do Thou remember me, O LORD, because I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing. Thou Alone art Good, Just, and Holy. Thou canst do all things, Thou accompishest all things, Thou fillest all things: only the sinner Thou leavest empty. Remember Thy Mercies, and fill my heart with Thy Grace; Thou Who wilt not that Thy Works should be void and in vain. How can I bear up myself in

² Isaiah vi. 3.³ Thos. à Kempis, b. iii. ch. iii.

this miserable life, unless Thou strengthen me with Thy Mercy and Grace."

THIRD POINT.

Consider what our LORD requires of His disciples, in answer to His Love. "JESUS saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught." At His Words, St. Peter, full of fervour, "drew the net to land," and did alone, as much as his six companions, who had dragged it through the water with much difficulty, so full was it of fishes. For perfect Charity has power for all things, doeth all things, suffereth all things, and endureth all things, in order to obey God, and to profit by the Favours received from Him. The true lovers of CHRIST bring all to Him, like St. Peter, and dedicate all the fruits of their labours to His Glory, having no other design than to honour Him on earth and in Heaven, whither they successfully draw their nets filled with attainments and with good works. Dost thou love thy SAVIOUR thus? Dost thou not spare thyself in His service? Is thy love strong enough to bear the weight of toil without yielding to fatigue? If our LORD said now to thee as He said to the seven disciples, "Bring of the fish which thou hast caught;" what good works hast thou done? What mortifications hast thou practised? What victories hast thou gained over thyself? how many souls hast thou converted? What couldst thou reply? Be confounded for thy negligence. Think of the future. One day He will ask thee this question. O how great will be the joy of a faithful servant, when, on entering Paradise, he sees there the fruit produced in a whole life, the many souls that he has led to Heaven! O what confusion awaits thee, if thou hast done nothing for CHRIST, and hast taken nothing in thine own net, but wind and water!

**Meditation for the Fifth Friday after
Easter.**

**THE LOVE OF JESUS IS A GENEROUS
AND PATIENT LOVE.**

**JESUS ASKS ST. PETER THRICE IF HE LOVES
HIM, ENTRUSTS HIS SHEEP TO HIM, AND
FORETELS HIS MARTYRDOM.**

“Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?”—
John xxi. 15.

FIRST POINT.

Jesus having fed His disciples before confiding His Sheep to St. Peter, asks if he loves Him. Why does He ask him this question?

1. Because the state of a pastor to which He designs to raise him is a state of perfection. One who aspires to the government of souls ought to excel in all virtues, but above all in “Charity, which is the bond of perfectness⁴.” “It is a thing wholly monstrous,” says St. Bernard, “to be highest in office, lowest in soul; first in station, last in life.” But “the true greatness of every soul is estimated by the measure of its love; so that the soul which hath much, is great, that which hath little, little; that which hath none, is nothing⁵,” since St. Paul saith, “If I have not charity, I am nothing⁶.”

⁴ Col. iii. 14.

⁵ “Monstruosa res est gradus summus et animus infimus; sedes prima et vita ima.”—(*De Consid.* ii. 7.)

Quantitas cujusque animæ æstimatur de mensura charitatis quam habet, ut quæ multum habet, magna sit; quæ parum, parva; quæ vero nihil, nihil.—(*S. Bern. Serm.* 27, in *Cant.* § 10.)

⁶ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

2. Because all that a good pastor needs, that he may perform his office, and fulfil his duties worthily, centres in Charity as its first principle or source. For if patience is required to bear the burthen of his charge, "Charity endureth all things"; if he need gentleness to feel for the weaknesses of his flock, "Charity is kind". It is well said by S. Gregory, "Charity is 'patient,' bearing with the faults of others; she is 'kind,' loving even those whom she beareth."

If humility is, as St. Bernard says¹, the most precious ornament of the pastoral dignity, Charity "is not puffed up".

If it is disinterestedness which distinguishes between the good shepherd and the hireling, Charity "seeketh not her own". What then were these words, "If thou lovest Me, feed My sheep?" They mean, "Simon, feed My sheep; not thyself. Remember that thou feedest My sheep; not thine. Seek not thy glory, but Mine; not thy dominion, but Mine; not thy interest, but Mine." O how few do this⁴! "All seek their own, not the things which are JESUS CHRIST'S".

3. Lastly, because the pastor who desires to do his duty, must often consider that he occupies the place of CHRIST, Who has confided His flock to him, and that he is bound, as far as he can, to imitate the extreme love which He testified, in laying down His

⁷ 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

⁸ 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

⁹ Caritas patiens est, ut aliena mala tolleret; benigna est, ut ipsos etiam, quos portat, amet.—(S. Greg. in Psal. vi. Pœn.)

¹ Nulla splendidior gemma humilitate, in omni præcipue ornatu summi Pontificis.—(S. Bern. De Consid. ii. 6.)

² 1 Cor. xiii. 4.

³ 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

⁴ S. Aug. Tract. 123, in Joan.

⁵ Phil. ii. 21.

Life for us⁶. For this reason, says St. Ambrose⁷, "He questioned St. Peter, not to learn, but to teach him, whom, at His Ascension to Heaven, He left us as the vicar of His Love."

Admire the Goodness of the Son of God, Who, not content with loving thee Himself, inspires them that have the rule over thee with the same love. Give Him thanks for His Care for thy salvation, and for the charitable assistance thou receivest from thy Superiors. Love them in return; pray for them; shew them great respect; and suffer them not to groan under their burthen; "for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account⁸."

SECOND POINT.

JESUS thrice asks St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" Why does He ask thrice?

1. To shew us how very needful Charity is, to enable superiors and spiritual pastors to bear the burthen of their office. Those eagles which seek their prey in the waters, are often drowned with it when it is too heavy. In like manner, such as rashly charge themselves with the care of souls, without measuring their capacity or their qualifications, often destroy themselves under a specious pretence of saving others.

They would not so easily engage in this office, if they considered its weight, not its distinctions. But they see only the exaltation of their ministry; and that attracts them, so that they see not the danger which they incur. For, says St. Bernard⁹, "if any

⁶ John xv. 12, 13.

⁷ Interrogabat non ut disceret, sed ut doceret quem elevandus in cœlum, amoris sui nobis velut vicarium relinquebat.—(S. Amb. in Luc. xxiv. l. x. § 175.)

⁸ Heb. xiii. 17.

⁹ Si altiore[m] quam meliorem esse delectat, non præmium

take pleasure in being great rather than good, he is looking, not for a recompense, but for a precipice."

2. To show to what an extreme point the Charity of a pastor should extend. "It is¹ as if He said: If thy conscience does not testify that thou lovest Me, and lovest Me exceedingly and perfectly, that is, more than thy goods, more than thy kindred, yea, more than even thine own self, (to fill up my threefold enquiry as to thy love,) charge not thyself with this office, nor meddle with My sheep, for whom I have shed My Blood." Or, as St. Gregory says², "Peter is taken in lieu of all, and is thrice asked, whether he loved the Redeemer. He is asked the first time, 'Lovest thou Me,' that through love he may be diligent to do mighty deeds. The second time, that by contemplation, he may know things on high. The third time, that by the fervour of a perfect charity, he may both be kindled to love his neighbour, and thirst more burningly to behold the Vision of his Creator."

3. Lastly, That St. Peter might have an opportunity of atoning for the fault that he had committed in thrice denying his Master³. "A threefold confession is given to replace a threefold denial, that the tongue might not minister to love less than to fear,

sed præcipitum expectamus.—(*S. Bern. Epist. 27. Vide et ep. 42.*)

¹ S. Bern. Serm. 76 in Cant. § 3.

² Pro omnibus Petrus assumitur, et an amet Redemptorem, tertio interrogatur. Primo namque ei dicitur: "Amas me?" ut per amorem agere fortia studeat. Secundo, ut in contemplando alta cognoscat. Tertio, ut perfectæ charitatis æstu et erga proximum ferveat, et ad speciem Conditoris ferventius inardescat.—(*S. Greg. in libros Regum, c. xvi. l. vi. c. 3. § 17.*)

³ Redditur negationi trinas trina confessio, ne minus amoris linguis serviat quam timori, et plus vocis elisionis videatur mors imminens, quam vita præsens.—(*S. Aug. Tract. 123 in Joan. § 5. See Maxim. de penit. Pet. formerly S. Anbr. Serm. 46.*)

or impending death seem to draw forth speech, more than the Presence of Life."

In this also admire the Goodness of **JESUS CHRIST**, Who restores to the penitence of His disciple more than he had lost by his offence. He does not reproach him with his fault, for "He⁴ hath no memory of sins against the penitent." Let not thy faults then discourage thee. Thou mayest, if thou wilt, efface them by thy tears, and even surpass those who have lived in innocence, if only thou lovest **JESUS CHRIST** more than they. Seek then to atone for the past by a holy and loving penitence. "Cleanse thy affection; with what vehemence it bore thee away to the world, let it now bear thee to the Maker of the world⁵." It ought to be a thousand times stronger; but "I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh; for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness⁶."

THIRD POINT.

JESUS foretels to St. Peter the martyrdom which he is to suffer, in order to make known to him the high and excellent degree of Charity required of him.

After having restored to him his pastoral office, does He promise him great riches, pleasures, and honours? By no means. He who seeks for these is unworthy of the character of a pastor. What does He promise him then? what does He foretel for him? Persecution, martyrdom, the death on the Cross. "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch

⁴ Euthym. ad Matt. xxviii. 18.

⁵ Purga amorem tuum. Quales impetus habebat ad mundum, tales habeat ad artificem mundi.—(*S. Aug. in Psal. xxxi. § 5.*)

⁶ Rom. vi. 19. See Baruch iv. 28.

forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." What meaneth this? Does it mean that good pastors and martyrs go to death against their will? No. They go most willingly, but it is through the power of grace, not through nature. For, as St. Augustine says⁷, "Who wishes for troubles and difficulties? Thou commandest them to be endured, not to be loved. No man loves what he endures, though he love to endure. For though he rejoices that he endures, he would rather there were nothing for him to endure." "Willing, yet shrinking," says St. Gregory⁸, "the martyr approaches the peril of the glorious conflict, viewing what in death he shrinks to endure, beholding in the fruit of death what he is seeking, and longs for."

This should be the fixed purpose of the true disciples of Christ. This must be the steadfast will of a generous and patient love. It must with willing heart give its sufferings, toils, goods, yea its life itself, for the salvation of souls. "Love is as strong as death. The way to magnify their office⁹, is not by luxury of dress, or fine houses, or a pompous train of horses, but by the ornament of a pure life, the study of spiritual things, the practice of good works¹." "How many," adds St. Bernard, "do otherwise." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

⁷ Quis velit molestias et difficultates? tolerari jubes eas, non amari. Nemo quod tolerat amat, etsi tolerare amat. Quamvis enim gaudeat se tolerare, mavult tamen non esse quod toleret.—(*S. Aug. Conf. x. 28.*)

⁸ In Job xxxix. 25.

⁹ Rom. xi. 13.

¹ Honorificabitur autem [ministerium] non cultu vestium, non equorum fastu, non amplis ædificiis, sed ornatis moribus, studiis spiritualibus, operibus bonis.—(*Ep. 42, s. Tract. ad Henr. Senon. de offio. Episc. c. 2, init.*)

**Meditation for the Saturday in the Fifth
Week after Easter.**

**THE LOVE OF JESUS IS A FAITHFUL
AND WATCHFUL LOVE.**

**JESUS REPROVES THE CURIOSITY OF ST. PETER,
AND COMMANDS HIM TO FOLLOW HIM.**

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?
Follow thou Me."—John xxi. 22.

REMARK.

WHEN Jesus had foretold the martyrdom of St. Peter, "He saith unto him, follow Me." Jesus went first, St. Peter followed Him, St. John came after. Peter turning about, seeth him following, and "seeing him, saith to Jesus, LORD, and what shall this man do?" Jesus, not seeing fit to satisfy his curiosity, saith unto him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" "What^s room then is left for those who assert that St. John is not dead, since he himself asserts plainly, that they who imagine this are in error?" His death^s is spoken of too, as certain, by the oldest writers,

^s Eathym. ad loc.

^s A fuller statement from Tillemont (H. E. Note 17 sur S. Jean l'Evangéliste) has been substituted for that in the original, which rather obscured the evidence. Tillemont quotes besides S. Hippolytus de Antichr. p. 41 (thought not to be his) and a homily in S. Chrysostome's works (t. vi. hom. 67, p. 604, ed. Fr. Duc.) "probably written at Ephesus." —[Ed.]

and even by the Church itself. Polycrates of Ephesus, who had seen the disciples of St. John, mentions that he "slept at Ephesus, thence to be raised at the last day, when CHRIST shall come in His glory, and seek again all His Saints⁴." St. Irenæus, the disciple of his disciple St. Polycarp, says that "he lived⁵ at Ephesus, governing the Church there until the time of Trajan." Origen⁶ says that "he died at Ephesus." St. Dionysius of Alexandria⁷ speaks of his tomb there. Tertullian⁸, that his death "frustrated the hopes of those who hoped that he would remain unto the coming of the Lord." St. Jerome⁹ that, worn out by old age, he died in the sixty-eighth year after the Passion of the Lord, and was buried nigh unto the city of Ephesus. St. Augustine¹ and St. Cyril of Alexandria² refute those who assert the contrary. Pope Celestine³ in writing to the council of Ephesus, speaks of the reverence shown to his relics; others⁴ in the Council speak of the signs of reverence towards his tomb; the Council itself⁵, that "John the Divine was then at Ephesus." St. Chrysostome⁶ speaks of his "tomb, with those of St. Peter, and St. Paul, and St. Thomas, being well known," in contrast with Moses, whose bones lay in a strange land, and "many Apostles, who, where they lie buried we know not." St. Epiphanius⁷ speaks of him as dead, in contrast with Elijah. Let us dwell then only on the Words of CHRIST, and seek to profit by them.

FIRST POINT.

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that

⁴ Eus. H. E. iii. 31.

⁷ Ib. viii. 26.

¹ In Joh. Tr. 124.

³ Conc. L. t. 3. p. 315.

⁵ Ib. p. 573.

⁷ Hæc. 79, c. 5.

⁵ Ib. c. 23.

⁸ De An. c. 50.

² Div. hom. 8. v. p. 367.

⁴ Ib. pp. 604, 605.

⁶ In Ep. ad Hebr. hom. 26, § 2.

⁶ Ib. c. i.

⁹ Vir. ill. c. 2.

to thee? Follow thou Me." That is, according to St. Augustine, he shall not die a violent but a natural death, and shall "tarry till I come" to take him from the world. But "What is that to thee?" Follow thou Me faithfully, and let others alone.

Learn, in the first place, to watch over thyself, without enquiring curiously into thy neighbour's concerns. "The human race," says St. Augustine², "is curious to know the life of others, slothful to amend its own." But³ one who fears God withdraws into himself, and watches carefully over the movements of his heart.

"My son¹, be not curious, nor trouble thyself with idle anxieties. 'What is' this or 'that to thee?' follow thou Me.' For what is it to thee, whether that man be such or such, or whether this man do or speak this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shall give account for thyself: why therefore dost thou entangle thyself?"

"Assuredly², O man, if thou watchest attentively thyself, it will be marvellous if thou canst ever think of other things." "The inward Christian³ preferreth the care of himself before all other cares, and he who diligently attendeth to himself, doth seldom speak much of others. Thou wilt never be thus inwardly religious, unless thou pass over other men's matters in silence, and look especially to thyself. If thou attend wholly unto God and thyself, thou wilt be but little moved by outward things, with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou,

² Curiosum genus ad cognoscendam vitam alienam, desiderium ad corrigendam suam.—(*Conf.* x. 3.)

³ Qui timet Dominum, convertetur ad cor suum. *Ecol.* xxi. 6. *Vulg.*

¹ Imit. of Christ, iii. 24.

² Vere si te vigilanter, homo, attendas, mirum est si aliud nunquam intendas.—(*S. Bern. De Grad. Humilitatis.*)

³ Imit. of Christ, ii. 5.

when thou art not with thyself? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited; if thou hast neglected thyself? If thou desirest peace of mind, and true unity of purpose, thou must put all things behind thee, and look only upon thyself."

"The⁴ soul that loveth God despiseth all things that are inferior to God." Enough for her is the dignity of being subject to God. "God Alone, Whose Eternity and Immensity fill all things, can fill and comfort the soul. He Alone is "the true joy of the heart."

"Whither⁵ can they flee, O Lord, who flee from Thy Presence? or where dost Thou not find them?" "Let the⁶ restless, the godless, depart and flee from Thee; yet Thou seest them, and dividest the darkness. And behold the universe with them is fair, though they are foul." "Let⁷ them then be turned, and seek Thee; because not as they have forsaken their Creator, hast Thou forsaken Thy creation. Let them be turned, and seek Thee; and behold, Thou art there in their heart, in the heart of those that confess to Thee and cast themselves upon Thee, and weep in Thy bosom, after all their rugged ways. Then dost Thou gently wipe away their tears, and they weep the more, and joy in weeping; even for that Thou, LORD, not man of flesh and blood, but Thou, LORD, Who madest them, re-makest and comfortest them. But⁸ where was I, when I was seek-

⁴ Ib. fin.

⁵ S. Aug. Conf. v. 2.

⁶ Eant et fugiant a te inquieti et iniqui; et tu vides eos, et distinguas umbras; et ecce pulchra sunt cum eis omnia, et ipsi turpes sunt.—(Ib.)

⁷ Convertantur ergo, et quærant te, quia non sicut ipsi deseruerunt Creatorem suum, ita tu deseruisti creaturam tuam; et ecce ibi es in corde eorum, in corde confitentium tibi, et proicientium se in te, et plorantium in sinu tuo, post vias suas difficiles.—(Ib.)

⁸ Et ubi ego eram quando te quærebam? Et tu eras ante

ing Thee? And Thou wert before me; but I had gone away from myself also; nor did I find myself; how much less Thee!"

SECOND POINT.

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me." That is, according to St. Cyril, be not curious to know the secrets of My Providence. Leave to My Disposal all that concerns thee and others. If I will that he tarry till I come to destroy Jerusalem by the armies of the Romans, or that he abide till the day of the last Judgment, "what is that to thee?" "Why⁹ dost thou search into the secrets of Divine Justice?"

The wise man gives us a salutary counsel, which much resembles these words of the Son of God. "Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength. But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence¹." When a holy man, admiring the judgments of God, desired to penetrate too far into their depth, it was said to him from above; "Think of thyself, and meddle not in the affairs of God. He has wisdom enough to govern the world; trust thyself to His guidance." God is like the Sun, says St. Hilary²: "As in the sun there is what thou mayest see, if thou willest to see what thou canst; but thou lovest what thou canst see, if thou strivest to see what thou canst not. So also in the things of God, thou hast what thou mayest understand, if thou

me; ego autem et a me discesseram, nec me inveniebam, quanto minus te.—(*Ib.*)

⁹ S. Cyril in c. 21 Joan.

¹ Ecclus. iii. 21, 22.

² Sicut est in sole quod videas, si hoc velis videre quod possis; amittas autem quod potes videre, dum quod non potes niteris. Ita et in rebus Dei habes quod intelligas, si intelligere quod potes velit. Cæterum si ultra quam potes, speres, id quoque quod potuisti nosse non poteris.—(*S. Hilary. De Triu. x. § 53.*)

willest to understand what thou canst. But if thou seekest beyond what thou canst, that too which thou mightest have known, shalt thou be unable to know."

"When³ one that was in anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church, before the altar, in prayer, and said within himself, 'O that I knew that I should yet persevere!' he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, 'What if thou didst know it, what wouldest thou do? Do now what thou wouldest do then, and thou shalt be secure.' And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noisome anxiety ceased; neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work."

"I will teach thee⁴, my son, (saith the Truth,) those things which are right and pleasing in My Sight." "Some walk not sincerely in My Sight, but led by a certain curiosity and pride, wish to know My secrets, and to understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation. These oftentimes, when I resist them for their pride and curiosity, do fall into great temptations and sins. Fear then the Judgments of God, and dread the Wrath of the Almighty. Do not however discuss the Works of the Most High, but search diligently thine own iniquities, in how great things thou hast offended, and how many good things thou hast neglected."

THIRD POINT.

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that

³ Imit. of Christ, i. 22.

⁴ Ib. iii. 4.

to thee? Follow thou Me." That is, according to St. Chrysostome⁵, "thou desirest to have this disciple, who follows thee, as a companion in what I have allotted thee, because thou hast an exceeding love and care for him. However much thou lovest him, thy love exceeds not Mine. Thou hast received thy task; keep it before thine eye; accomplish, strive, fight. What if I will that he abide here, be thine eye and heart ever on that is thine."

Learn, as a third lesson, to moderate thy cares and desires, however just and charitable thou thinkest them, and even to suffer all hindrances with humbleness and resignation, and willingly to receive reproof and warning. "Escape for thy life: look not behind thee;" to see what others are doing. Charity teaches thee indeed to rejoice in the good that is done in the world, and to mourn for the evil committed there; but she warns thee not to disquiet thyself and take offence because of its disorders. Think not of the evil that others do, but of the good that thou hast to do. Think of the Law of God, not of those who break it. Thou shalt not be judged by their opinions, but by the truth, which thou must take for thy rule. Pray, then, to God to remedy the evil, and to grant thee grace to abide ever with Him, and to be faithful to Him. How great a grace, to be enabled to hold on firm and constant until death in the Service of so good a Master!

"My son⁷, Suffer Me to do with thee what I please. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as man, thou judgest in many things as human feelings persuade thee." "O LORD, what Thou sayest is true. Thy anxiety for me is greater than all the care that I can take for myself. O

⁵ Hom. 88 in Joh. § 3.

⁶ Gen. xix. 7.

⁷ Imit. of Christ. iii. 17.

LORD, if only my will may remain right and firm towards Thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please Thee." "Great is the peace that they have who have Thy Law, and they are not offended at it." They love virtue wherever it is seen, they seek to reclaim sinners from their wickedness, and if they cannot do this, they pity their wretchedness; but they are very far from following them, and perishing with them. "He who loveth his brother, abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."

**Meditation for the Sixth Sunday in
[Fifth after] Easter.**

ON THE GOSPEL FOR THE DAY.

**PRAYER IS NECESSARY AT ALL TIMES, BUT
ESPECIALLY AT THIS, THE TIME WHEN OUR
LORD IS ABOUT TO LEAVE US, AND TO ASCEND
TO HEAVEN.**

"I came forth from the FATHER, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the FATHER."
John xvi. 28.

"At that day ye shall ask in My Name."—V. 26.

REMARK.

THE SON of God, when about to quit His Apostles by Death, leaves prayer to them as an especial means of providing for all their wants during His Absence. The Discourse which He addresses to them, to teach them its practice, is highly suitable to the time of His Ascension. Therefore, on the Sunday immediately preceding that event, the Church makes use of it, as

⁸ Ps. cxix. 165.

⁹ 1 John ii. 10.

containing important instruction for preparing to receive those fruits of his Love, for which He teaches us to hope after He shall have ascended to Heaven.

"Hitherto," says He, "ye have asked nothing in My Name," because this way of praying was new and unknown to the Jews. "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken to you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in My Name, and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father," Therefore, prayer is necessary to you; but that it may be availing, remember to offer it "in My Name," and ye shall obtain of My Father "whatsoever ye shall ask."

FIRST POINT.

Prayer is necessary at all times:

1. To prevent evils which might befall us, especially a bad death. We daily meet with many shoals on which we might make shipwreck¹. We are always in danger of perishing during this life; every moment may be fatal to us. "Take heed to yourselves," says our LORD², "lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that Day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these

¹ S. Chrys. [in Psal. cxxix.]

² Luke xxi. 34.

things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man³."

2. "To obtain the Divine Assistance which is hourly necessary to us for our salvation." For to be heard, our LORD says that we must "always pray and not faint;" like the widow who by her importunity constrained the unjust judge to do her justice. "He spake this parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint⁴."

3. To perform every action well, and to avoid "every appearance of evil⁵." "Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in CHRIST JESUS concerning you⁶." "Call⁷ upon God, and give Him thanks at the beginning of every action; and when it is finished, do likewise." When the Angel had touched Jacob, and made the sinew of his thigh to shrink, "he halted⁸." "Prayer," says one of old⁹, is the sinew of the soul. For as through the sinews the body is held together, runs, stands, lives, is compacted, but if any cut them, he dissolves the whole harmony of the body; so souls are through holy prayers held in union, are firm, and run easily the course of godliness."

If thou askest how it is possible to pray always, I reply, that there are three sorts of prayer, in which the whole of the Christian life must pass, now in one, now in the other, viz: prayer of words, of actions, and of the heart.

The first comprehends vocal and mental prayer. For thought is an inward speech, of which outward

³ Luke xxi. 36.

⁴ Luke xviii. 1.

⁵ 1 Thess. v. 22.

⁶ 1 Thess. v. 18, 19.

⁷ Ad omne opus quodcumque inchoaveris facere, primum invoca Deum, et gratias ei age, et cum consummaveris, illud similiter fac.—(*Paulinus Foroj. De Salutaribus Docum.* c. 28. *App. S. Aug.* t. vi.)

⁸ Gen. xxxiii. 31.

⁹ Hom. 2, de Precat. Opp. (dubia) S. Chrys. t. ii. p. 785.

words are but the expression, serving to make known our wants and feelings.

The second comprehends our good works, which are both a means of honouring God, and of making an appeal to Him. Thus it is said that the blood of Abel crieth for vengeance¹, and that of Jesus for mercy².

The third comprehends all the time that the soul is in a state of prayer; that is, when she has a secret inclination and readiness to address herself to God as soon as she shall be set free from works of necessity and charity: just as a miser who, given to gain, though not always actually employed in making it, is yet disposed to it, always ready to seek it at any time; and he finds the smallest occasion sufficient to rouse his cupidity, because his heart is continually falling back upon its master passion.

It is evident, then, that it is always a Christian's duty, and always in his power to pray, if not actually by words of the heart and lips, at least virtually by state and inclination. For as he should always be in a state and disposition of good-will, charity, and kindness towards his fellowmen, of lowliness, confusion, and humiliation as regards himself, so likewise should he always be in a state and disposition of reverence, love, prayer, and contrition towards God; so that as soon as he hears Him named, or the smallest occurrence recalls Him to his memory, he may return to Him as to his Centre.

SECOND POINT.

There are certain times when prayer is more necessary than at others; for instance, "in the morning and the evening." Thus, under the Ancient Law, two lambs were sacrificed daily, one "in the morn-

¹ Gen. iv. 10.

² Heb. xii. 24.

ing," and the other "at even," and incense was burnt upon the altar of incense³. Daniel and David added prayer at mid-day. "In the evening, and morning, and at noon-day will I pray, and that instantly, and He shall hear my voice⁴."

2ndly. "In great journeys." Thus, when Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, and when the Priests took up the ark of the covenant, at setting forward in the morning, he said, "Rise up, LORD, and let Thine enemies be scattered;" and in the evening, when they encamped, he prayed again in these words, "Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel⁵." Thus David; "Praised be the LORD daily, even the God Who helpeth us, and poureth His Benefits upon us⁶." And Tobit, when he sent his son with the heavenly guide, "God, Which dwelleth in Heaven, prosper your journey, and the Angel of God keep you company⁷."

3rdly. "In important affairs, when we need more light to guide us, and more vigour to act." Thus David, before attacking the Philistines, enquired of God if he should undertake the enterprise, and did not attempt it till he had received the favourable reply, "Go, and smite them⁸." Thus Esther and Judith had recourse to prayer, and by it obtained extraordinary assistance; the one, in cutting off the head of Holofernes, the other, in moving the heart of Ahasuerus, and changing him from a lion to a lamb⁹. Our LORD Himself passed the night in prayer before choosing His Apostles¹; not that He needed it, but for our instruction.

4thly. "In great dangers, in persecutions, and in violent temptations." Thus, when a powerful and

³ Ex. xxix. 38, 39. xxx. 7, 8.

⁴ Ps. lv. 18. Dan. vi. 10.

⁵ Ps. lxxviii. 19. ⁷ Tobit v. 26.

⁹ Esther xiv. Judith ix.

⁵ Num. x. 35, 36.

⁸ 1 Sam. xxiii. 2.

¹ Luke vi. 12.

formidable enemy came against King Jehoshaphat, with a numerous army, immediately he "set himself to seek the LORD²," and prayed thus, "O our God, wilt Thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon Thee³." A prayer which was speedily heard, and followed by good success. Ponder this salutary advice, and profit by it. Never do anything without praying for the help of God; remember that thou canst do nothing without CHRIST, and that for want of having recourse to Him, the wisest are often deceived, and the holiest in danger of perishing. "With how much grief," says an eyewitness of old, "have I seen men of noble spirit, when, after having long suffered for the confession of the Faith, they were now near receiving their crown, at length miserably deny Him Whom they had so stedfastly confessed." Why did they fall? "They⁴ had turned their eyes away from Him, Who Alone giveth strength to the weak; they had intermitted prayer, and had begun to look to human help." "Woe⁵ to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of Me."

THIRD POINT.

If there is any season in the year when we should more particularly apply ourselves to prayer, assuredly it is this. For when our LORD tells us that He is about to "leave the world, and go to the Father," what bond of union, what means of making ourselves heard, remains to us poor orphans, but prayer? Moreover, the time for conversion hastens by; for

² 2 Chron. xx. 3.³ 2 Chron. xx. 12.⁴ Dimoverant oculos ab eo qui solus dat robur infirmis; intermisserant orationem, ac coeperant ad humana præsidia respicere.—(*De Duplic. Mart. App. S. Cypr.*)⁵ Is. xxx. 1.

we shall have no part in the Adorable Spirit Whom CHRIST is about to pour on His Church, unless we are living in union with Him by Grace; and how can we hope to obtain this grace if we do not obey His Words, "Ask, and it shall be given you?" To whom has He promised His Spirit, but "to them that ask Him?" Withdraw, then, at this holy season, from the tumult and bustle of the world, to watch unto prayer with the greatest possible recollectedness; so when the LORD departeth, may He not leave thee alone in that world which He forsaketh; but thou mayest follow Him in Spirit, regarding this earth only as a place of exile and bondage, thy heart being "hid with CHRIST in God". Consider what thou wouldest have done, if thou hadst been with the Apostles when our LORD left them, and seek to enter into their feelings. See how they hid themselves after their separation, unable any longer to take an interest in the world, and continuing "with one accord in prayer", waiting for the Spirit which He had promised them. O how holy were their minds! O how carefully did they prepare themselves to receive Him! how empty and bare were they of things below! how ardent in their prayers! how desirous of being altogether filled with God! Seek then to hold fast these things, and thou hast all things. Cast away, sever, drive out the world from within thee, and God Himself will fill thee, and make thee a new creature.

⁵ Matt. vii. 7.

⁷ Col. iii. 3.

⁶ Luke xi. 13.

⁸ Acts i. 14.

Meditation for the Sixth Monday after Easter.

**JESUS, BEING ABOUT TO LEAVE THEM, APPEARS
TO ALL HIS DISCIPLES ON A MOUNTAIN OF
GALILEE, AND SHEWS THEM HIS GLORY AND
HIS POWER.**

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him : but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth.”—Matt. xxviii. 16, 18.

REMARK.

ST. MATTHEW alone speaks clearly of this Appearance, which, nevertheless, is the most celebrated of all that preceded the Day of the Ascension of the SON of GOD, both on account of the place, for it was the only one where He had appointed them to meet, and of the number of the disciples to whom He appeared. For although St. Matthew makes mention only of the Eleven, it is probably of this appearance that St. Paul speaks to the Corinthians, when he tells them, that he “delivered unto them how that CHRIST died for our sins ; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day ; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve ; after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.” For the same reason our LORD chose this mountain (which was probably Mount Tabor, where He was transfigured), because it was a convenient place for showing Himself to a great number of persons together.

Some interpreters suppose that CHRIST appeared

* 1 Cor. xv. 4, 6.

at first raised in the air resplendent with Majesty and Glory, which excited great reverence and veneration in the hearts of the disciples, ("They saw Him," it is said, "and worshipped.") and that He afterwards approached nearer to them, and said, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." Words capable of filling them with joy, confidence, love, reverence, and faith. And these are the fruits that we should gather from this meditation.

FIRST POINT.

Wonderful is the power of JESUS; it should, therefore, excite in us a high esteem and veneration of His Sacred Person. "The¹ world had seen many men who had power in earth, but a man Who had power in Heaven had it not seen." But "the Lord hath created a new thing on the earth²." Behold a Man Who hath power, and "all power in Heaven and in earth." At Him do men marvel, saying, "What manner of man is This, that even the wind and the sea obey Him³?"

What power have kings over the skies, over winds, lightnings, storms, sicknesses, or death? "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy⁴?" said Jehoram, King of Israel, when the King of Syria sent Naaman, and requested him to heal him. And when Canute, King of England, desired to rebuke his courtiers' flattery of his great power, he sat down upon the sea-shore, and commanded the waves to stop at his feet; at that very moment a wave arose which covered him, showing his want of power, by wetting him, and setting him at defiance.

¹ Viderat orbis homines multos qui potestatem haberent in terra; at hominem nullum viderat qui potestatem haberet in celo.—(*P. Barradius*, 4, l. 9, c. 6.)

² Jer. xxxi. 22.

³ Matt. viii. 27.

⁴ 2 Kings v. 7.

Thou only, Supreme Monarch of the Universe! canst command the elements, and say with truth, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." "The LORD is great in Sion, and High above all people." "O magnify the LORD our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill, for the LORD our God is Holy ⁵."

SECOND POINT.

This Power is His by Merit as well as Birth. He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God ⁶," and to claim absolute power over all creatures. He has acquired it by His Sufferings. The Wounds received on the Cross are His lawful titles, and the ensigns of His Dominion. "CHRIST," says St. Thomas Aquinas ⁷, "humbled Himself even to Suffering and Death, which He owed not. He was exalted by a glorious Resurrection. He humbled Himself in place, in that His Body was laid in the grave, His Soul descended into hell. He was exalted into Heaven. 'He Who descended, the Same is it Who ascended above all Heavens, that He might fill all things ⁸.' He humbled Himself to the shame and reproaches which He endured. He was exalted to the Right Hand of the FATHER, and His Divinity was made known, as in the prophet, 'All kings shall bow down before Him; all nations shall serve Him ⁹;' and the Apostle, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name; that at the Name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of God the FATHER ¹.' He

⁵ Ps. xcix. 2, 9.

⁷ S. Thom. 3. P. q. 49, a. 6.

⁹ Ps. lxxii. 11.

⁶ Phil. ii. 6.

⁸ Eph. iv. 10.

¹ Phil. ii. 9—11.

humbled Himself, in that He was given into the power of man, as He Himself saith to Pilate, 'Thou couldest have no power against Me, unless it were given Thee from Above;' He is exalted to have 'all power in heaven and in earth,' and 'to² Him is all judgment committed, because He is the Son of Man.' "

It is in these things that He must be thy example. Never attribute to thyself honour and influence that thou dost not possess; aspire not to offices of which thou art unworthy. The Cross is thy way to Glory. Lowliness, patience, gentleness, obedience, are the glorious titles by which thou mayest reign with CHRIST, and triumph over all the enemies of thy salvation. Hear what our LORD once said to St. Catherine of Sienna, as St. Antoninus relates, "I could have annihilated the powers of this world without the Cross; I might have chosen other means of overcoming them. But it was My pleasure to claim Glory by Suffering, to buy Victory at the cost of My Blood, that thou mightest learn by My Example that to overcome the powers of darkness, thou must place thy whole hope and dependence upon My Cross." These words made so deep an impression on the heart of that holy woman, that burning with an ardent desire of Paradise, nothing could comfort her or reconcile her to life, but the hope, that by remaining in it, and enduring greater pains, she was suffering with CHRIST.

THIRD POINT.

"His Power reacheth all things." No sinner can resist it; it is infinite. Neither can he fly from it; its extent is unlimited. Consequently none can escape it. Being all sinners, we have all then reason to fear, and to say with Jeremiah, "Thou art Great,

² John v. 22, 27.

and Thy Name is great in might. Who would not fear Thee, O King of Nations³?" When Hezekiah was informed of his approaching death, "he turned his face to the wall, and wept sore⁴." He was a good Prince, and served God with a true heart; it would seem that he had no reason to weep at his death. "Dost⁵ thou ask the cause of his tears? Remember that he is man, and thou wilt not wonder at the ground of his grief. For none can come without fear to the judgment of God, having a consciousness of sin." "I fear horribly," says St. Bernard⁶, "to fall into the hands of a dying Life, and of a living Death."

FOURTH POINT.

"His power is no less to be loved than dreaded." His Goodness gives it its noblest employment. "All power is given unto Me in Heaven, and in earth, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, &c." He says not, Go, and avenge My Death; Go, and destroy My crucifiers; such is the language of sinners; nor doth He say, I have power, therefore I will take the property of others, I have wealth and much goods, therefore I will say to my soul, "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry⁷," none dares attack thee; and if any attempted it, thou hast power to make him repent of it. The Son of God speaks far otherwise. "Go," says He, "labour for the salvation of men, teach them the way to Heaven, release them from the bondage of Satan, efface their sins, confer on them the benefits that I have merited for them, and of which I entrust the dispensation to you. Ye shall suffer much in this work of charity,

³ Jer. x. 6, 7.⁴ 2 Kings xx. 23.⁵ S. Hier. L. ii. contra Pelag. c. 12.⁶ Horreo incidere in manus mortis viventis, et vitæ morientis.—(*De Consid.* v. 12.)⁷ Luke xii. 19.

but fear neither torments nor death. I have suffered all, I have overcome, and behold I live. By this did I enter into My Glory. Be assured that I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

O what joy to be the disciple of so good, so powerful a Master! what confidence should we not have in Him! what gratitude, what love, what reverence, what honour should we not pay to Him! "When Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead," they "went and fell down before his face, and they said, Behold we be thy servants'." With how much more reason should we not say to CHRIST, "Behold, O LORD, how that I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine hand-maid;" it is my happiness to depend on Thee, and my glory to obey Thee for ever.

Meditation for the Sixth Tuesday after Easter.

JESUS, BEING ABOUT TO DEPART, APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES ON A MOUNTAIN OF GALILEE, WHITHER HE HAD APPOINTED THEM TO GO, AND ORDAINS THEM TO THE CONQUEST OF SOULS, AND THE CONVERSION OF ALL SINNERS.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."—Matt: xix. 20.

SUBJECT.

Jesus had received supreme power from His Father, from the moment of His Conception, and had often

⁷ Gen. i. 15, 18.

⁸ Ps. cxvi. 14.

exercised it during His mortal Life, by healing the sick, casting out devils, commanding the elements, and preaching the Gospel throughout all provinces of Jewry. But hitherto He had not openly declared His great design of extending His Dominion "unto the world's end," and of converting all nations to the Faith.

On the contrary, He had forbidden His disciples to preach out of Jewry, and had said of Himself, that He was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel¹." But after His glorious Resurrection, He sets no other bounds to His Conquests than those of the universe; and therefore He assembles all His disciples on Mount Tabor, and after declaring the universal power given unto Him "in Heaven and in earth," He commands them to carry the Gospel to "all nations;" to baptize them "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the HOLY GHOST;" and to teach them "to observe all" His "Commandments." This is a summary of Christianity, an abridgment of the doctrines of salvation, which are Faith, Baptism, and the keeping of the commandments of God, without which none can be saved. These shall be the three Points of our meditation.

FIRST POINT.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." JESUS, being about to ascend to Heaven, desires to teach all men the way to follow Him, and to ascend thither after Him. For this purpose He prepares for them the ladder of faith, which reaches, like Jacob's ladder, from earth to Heaven, and to encourage them to ascend it, He promises them the reward of everlasting salvation. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned²."

¹ Ps. lxxii. 3.

¹ Matt. xv. 24.

² Mark xvi. 16.

For, as St. Paul says, the Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth : to the Jew first, and also to the Greek ³." CHRIST indeed preached it first to the Jews, but He did not shut out the Gentiles. "Is He the God of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also ⁴." "For all nations He died ⁵ upon the Cross; to all nations He sendeth forth the fruit of that most sweet Tree ⁶."

This is a powerful motive to constrain us to receive the whole faith, and practise it; which is our first lesson. "Wherefore," says St. James, "lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls ⁷." Art thou called to endure contempt, to suppress a desire of revenge, to stifle an impure thought? Say within thyself, The Gospel commands it, I must do it, my salvation depends upon it. "He that believeth shall be saved, He that believeth not shall be damned."

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." This is the second lesson that CHRIST's servants must learn, and it is no less important than the former. "Who that was not altogether listless and devoid of the fear of God, would not gladly traverse the whole earth, in order to teach beings ransomed with the Blood of God, or to bring them salvation ⁸?" "If a man could but see the beauty of a single soul," said St. Catharine of Sienna, "he would willingly die a

³ Rom. i. 16.

⁴ Rom. iii. 29.

⁵ Rom. x. 12.

⁶ Pro omnibus Gentibus crucis mortem subit, ad omnes Gentes dulcissimæ arboris fructus emittit.

⁷ Jas. i. 21.

⁸ Quis libenter non percurrat orbem terrarum, creaturas Dei sanguine redemptas docens, salutemque eis afferens, nisi qui ignavus fuerit et divini timoris expert! — (*Barradius*, tom. iv. l. 9, c. 9.)

hundred times daily to save it⁹." What would he not do then, if he could see the glory reflected on it from CHRIST? Is not the salvation of souls the crowning work of His mercy? are not the evangelic labourers who go through the world to save them, preparing His "chariots of salvation"? O blest employment, to proclaim the name of JESUS throughout the world, and to cause it to be adored by all people! "All the ends of the world," says the Prophet, "shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the LORD; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him²." "They shall come, and the heavens shall declare His Righteousness, unto a people that shall be born, whom the LORD hath made." Happy he who carries such a message.

SECOND POINT.

"Baptizing them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST." Consider that Baptism is the gate by which men enter the Church, which is the Kingdom of CHRIST. David calls it "the gate of righteousness³," because through it men are justified; in it sins are drowned; the water which cleanses the flesh being but a sign of the grace which purifies the soul, and makes us the children of GOD. Therefore CHRIST commanded this Sacrament to be conferred "in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST," for three chief reasons.

First, to distinguish Christians from Jews and infidels, and to teach them that their soul is consecrated to the Most Holy Trinity, and that being a sacred thing, and belonging to the FATHER Who created, the SON Who redeemed, and the HOLY

⁹ S. Anton. 8. p. tit. 23, c. 14. 13.

¹ Hab. iii. 8. ² Ps. xxii. 27, 32.

³ Ps. cxviii. 19.

GHOST Who sanctified it, they have no right to alienate or defile it.

Secondly ; to shew them that as their spiritual life proceeds only from the Grace and Mercy of the Three Divine Persons, so they can do nothing without Their aid ; since to do a good work we require power to perform it, light to know how to perform it, good-will to desire to perform it. And power is attributed to the **FATHER**, light to the **SON**, and good-will to the **HOLY GHOST**.

Thirdly, to teach them that all their strength being thus derived, it is reasonable that all that they do should be done to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity ; for which cause, the early Christians were wont to begin all their actions by making the sign of the Cross⁴, and saying, "In the Name of the **FATHER**, and of the **SON**, and of the **HOLY GHOST** ;" i. e. to the glory of these Three Adorable Persons, as Tertullian and St. Jerome explain it.

Lastly, to remind them that their whole conduct must be holy, and their whole life worthy of the Indwelling Presence of the Eternal God, and of the Sanction and condescension of the Three Divine Persons. By this did St. Dionysia⁵, when her own martyrdom was nearly achieved at the hands of the Arian Vandals, "so strengthen her only son, as yet tender of age and delicate, whom she saw somewhat shrinking through fear of the tortures, that he became more endurant far than his mother." "Remember⁶,

⁴ Tert. de Cor. c. 3, p. 165, and n. f. Oxf. Tr.

⁵ Vict. Vit. de Pers. Afr. l. v. init.

⁶ Memento, fili mi, nos in nomine Trinitatis baptizatos in matre Catholica ; non perdamus indumentum salutis nostræ, ne veniens invitator vestem non inveniat nuptialem, et dicat ministris : "Mittite in tenebras exteriores, ubi erit fletus oculorum et stridor dentium." Illa, fili, pœna timenda est quæ nunquam finitur ; illa desideranda vita, quæ semper habetur.—(Ib.)

my son," she said, "that we were baptized in the Name of the Trinity, in our Catholic Mother; let us not lose the robe of our salvation, lest the King who bade us, find not the wedding-garment, and say to His servants, Cast them forth into outer darkness, where shall be weeping of eyes, and gnashing of teeth. Remember, my son, that those sufferings are to be feared which never end; that life is to be longed for which is possessed for ever." Engrave these words in thy heart, and, blessing the most Holy Trinity for the grace of Baptism, say with the royal Prophet, "Open me the gates of righteousness, that I may go in to them, and give thanks unto the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD, the righteous shall enter into it. I will thank Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and hast become my salvation," in the day of my Baptism. "This is the day which the LORD hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it." Keep this day holy in the congregation; come even unto the horns of the altar. "Help me now, O LORD; O LORD, send us now prosperity. Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the LORD. We have wished you good luck, ye that are of the House of the LORD. God is the LORD, Who hath shewed us light. Thou art my God, and I will thank Thee: Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee."

THIRD POINT.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." To have received the Faith and Baptism is not enough to save us; we must add the keeping of the Commandments of God. "The immoveable faith in the Undivided Trinity is the Foundation upon which the whole edifice of Salvation must rest;" but thou must build thereupon.

⁷ Ps. cxviii. 19, 21, 24, 28.

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified¹." "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him²?" "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect³?"

It is not enough to keep some commandments, we must keep them all. "Therefore hold I straight all thy commandments, and all false ways I utterly abhor⁴." Wilt thou save thy soul? "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves⁵." Consider Who speaks and declares His will to thee! Thy God, thy Redeemer, thy Judge, Who will "reward every man according to his works⁶." Say then to Him with the royal Prophet, "Thou hast charged that we should diligently keep Thy Commandments⁷." "I shall keep Thy Law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart⁸." "I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep Thy righteous judgments⁹."

¹ Rom. ii. 13.

² Ps. cxix. 128.

³ Ps. cxix. 4.

⁴ Jas. ii. 14.

⁵ Jas. i. 22.

⁶ Ps. v. 34.

⁷ Jas. v. 21, 22.

⁸ Matt. xvi. 27.

⁹ Ps. cxix. 106.

Meditation for the Sixth Wednesday after Easter.

JESUS, BEING ABOUT TO DEPART, APPEARS TO
HIS DISCIPLES ON A MOUNTAIN OF GALILEE,
WHERE HE HAD COMMANDED THEM TO AS-
SEMBLE, AND PROMISES THEM HIS HELP AND
HIS PRESENCE TO THE END OF THE WORLD.

“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”
Matt. xxviii. 20.

SUBJECT.

St. Matthew concludes his Gospel, as Ezekiel ends his prophecy, by the Presence of the Lord, without which His elect “can do nothing^s,” but with which they are all-powerful. “And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there⁹.” These are the last words that God spake by the mouth of the prophet, and, as St. Jerome remarks, they apply properly only to the Church. His last words in the Gospel of St. Matthew are, “I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” He speaks not to His Apostles only, since He promises His Presence till the end of the world, but to the whole Church in general, and individually to every one of the faithful who keep His Commandments, and live holy lives in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel. This admirable privilege, which sets the seal on the glorified life of Jesus on earth, shall be the subject of our meditation.

FIRST POINT.

Consider that CHRIST is present with His Church

^s John xv. 5.

⁹ Ezek. xlvi. 35.

and with His elect, with "a loving Presence¹," "closer," says the Prophet Ezekiel, "than that of the garment to the body."

1 It is a directing Presence. For He leads them by straight and sure ways to perfection, as He led the wise men to the manger of Bethlehem, where the young child Jesus was, and then warned them to return by another way, that they might avoid the fury and the artful malice of Herod.

2 It is "a protecting Presence²." Such St. Felix experienced It to be, when he escaped from the hands of his persecutors by means of a spider's web, which concealed him between two old ruined buildings, closing the opening through which he had passed, and causing him to say these remarkable words, "When CHRIST is present, a spider becomes a wall; when CHRIST is absent, a wall becomes a spider's web³."

3 It is a consoling and correcting Presence. Such St. Martin found It, when, at the ordination of Felix, Bishop of Treves, he had communicated with the Ithacian prelates, who had brought about the death of Priscillian, and being full of dejection on the next morning, an Angel appeared to him who said, Martin, "thou art pricked in heart with reason; but no other escape opened to thee. Retrieve thy virtue; resume thy firmness; lest thou risk not thy renown, but thy salvation⁴."

¹ *Ero prope ipsos, sicut tunica prope corpus ipsorum.*—(Ezech. xxxiv. *justa vers. Clem. Alex. l. i. Paedag. 9.*)

² Gen. xv. 1.

³ "Præsentæ Christo, aranea fit murus; absente Christo, murus fit aranea." This is related by S. Paulinus (A. 398) Poem 16, l. 86, sqq.

"Sic ubi Christus adest nobis, et aranea muro est:

At cui Christus abest, et murus aranea fit."—V. 147, 148.

⁴ Sulp. Severus in vita, Dial. iii. 15. See further the Church of the Fathers, Art. S. Martin.

4 It is a sustaining and supporting Presence : by which He provides both for their spiritual and bodily wants, as he did for those of Elijah and of St. Paul the Hermit, whom he caused to be fed by a raven in the desert.

5 It is a real Presence in the Holy Eucharist, which makes a Heaven upon earth, as St. Chrysostome says, and enables the Church militant to repeat with more reason than Moses, "What nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for ?" There is He present with us, as with the blessed in heaven, but with this difference, that in Heaven, which is the throne of His Glory, the blessed see plainly, both His Humanity and His Divinity ; we in the Holy Eucharist, which is the throne of His Love, see neither His Godhead nor His Humanity, but firmly believe that Both are there with a continual presence, which shall endure to the end of the world. O deep ocean of bliss ! "If the LORD himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say, if the LORD Himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us ⁶, they had swallowed us up quick." "Rejoice," said the Angel to St. Romanus the martyr, "and be strong in the Wisdom and Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. For the LORD our GOD is with thee. Why sayest thou, 'Hast Thou departed from me.' Finish then thy course, and thou shalt come to our LORD, and receive the crown of immortality ⁷." Look upon these

⁵ Deut. iv. 15.

⁶ Ps. cxxiv. 1, 2.

⁷ *Gaudeas et corroborearis in sapientia et gratia Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Ecce enim tecum est Dominus Deus ; et cur dixisti : Recessisti a me ? Consumma ergo cursum decertationis tue, et venies ad Dominum nostrum, accipiens coronam immortalitatis.*—(*Surius, 7 Febr.*)

[This vision is not related by Eusebius de Res. l. ii., but he does insist on a miracle, which may have been the occa-

words as addressed to thyself, and say thankfully with that noble martyr, "I will magnify Thee, O God, my King, and I will praise Thy Name for ever and ever".

SECOND POINT.

Consider that this most blessed Presence of JESUS CHRIST is the whole happiness, and the whole strength of His righteous servants, whom it makes all-powerful like Himself. "Lo I am with you," He saith; "Fear" not your own weakness, but trust in My strength." "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." Weak as you are, I will make you almighty. Nothing shall be wanting to you, nothing shall have power to hurt you. Nothing shall be able to resist you; ye shall do all that ye will, and obtain of My Father all that ye desire. This is the

sion of it, that the cutting out of his tongue did not produce death, but he was remanded to prison, where, as Eusebius relates, "from many eye-witnesses," he "remained for many months, and spoke with others, and at length, of the Cross and victory of Christ."—(*Ruinart, Acta Mart.* p. 381.) S. Chrysostome (Hom. i. de S. Romano, t. 2, p. 611, sqq.) is occupied exclusively with the miracle of the speech, as is also Euseb. Gall. Serm. 50, B. P. T. v. Prudentius (perist. t.) relates further, as well as Eusebius, the preternatural extinction of the pile on which he was to have been burnt. This S. Romanus is not commemorated in the Roman Breviary. Three unquestionable miracles were wrought for him, the extinction of the pile, the preservation of his life after his tongue had been cut out, the continuance of his speech without it, and that plainer than before. He was raised up at a most eventful time, to rouse the courage of Christians, when miserably and widely giving way in the persecution of Diocletian. The Acta, however, are spoken of slightly by Tillemont, so that there seems to be no ancient evidence for this one vision. [Ed.]

^a Ps. cxlv. 1.

^b Ecce ego vobiscum sum. Nolite ergo de vestra infinitate trepidare; sed de mea potestate confidite.—(*Lib. de Vocat. Gentium*, ii. 2, in *App. Opp. S. Prosper.*)

glorious fruit that the Elect gather from the Fulness of their Master's Presence.

1. In the Presence of CHRIST nothing can be wanting, for He is the Fountain of all good. Therefore the Angel that appeared to Gideon, to encourage him to fight against the enemies of God, said only, "The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour¹." And this was saying all, for he who has God can want nothing.

2. In the Presence of CHRIST nothing can hurt them. "If God be for us, who can be against us²?" CHRIST is always nigh unto such as fear Him. With His Protection there is nothing to fear; therefore they fear nothing: neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil. Keep me by Thee, they say, and I can defy every created thing. All that they need fear is separation from CHRIST; but nothing can sever them from Him but their own consent³.

3. In the Presence of CHRIST nothing can resist them, they do all that they desire. Fear not, "there shall be no man able to stand before you⁴." One of you shall be stronger than an army set in battle-array. For he who has God on his side is almighty. "I can do all things through CHRIST, Which strengtheneth me⁵." He who can do all, is almighty; he who is almighty, does whatsoever he wills. If he will, he can even obtain good from every evil that befalls him, which is the sign of supreme power; and this, in truth, the faithful do. They profit by all things; by poverty, contempt, temptations, sicknesses, and persecutions. What gives them this power? 1. Faith in CHRIST. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth⁶." 2. Trust in CHRIST. "They that wait upon the

¹ Judges vi. 10.

² Rom. viii. 31.

³ Rom. viii. 35.

⁴ Deut. xi. 25.

⁵ Phil. iv. 13.

⁶ Mark ix. 23.

LORD shall renew their strength¹." 3. Love for CHRIST. "Charity endureth all things²." "Love³, and do whatsoever thou wilt." 4. Prayer in the Name of CHRIST. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER in My Name, He will give it you⁴." In this Name they gain Heaven, and grasp their crown by a holy and irresistible violence. "All² things are possible to one who leaneth upon Him." And this minisheth not, but increaseth the glory of God. "Nothing," says St. Bernard⁵, "so sets forth the Almighty Power of God, as that He maketh those almighty who hope in Him." And may we not call those almighty to whom all things are possible? And the soul that, quitting herself, leans upon God, may so subdue herself, that evil shall have no more power over her. For no force shall suffice, no artifice or seduction prevail, to unsettle her pure rest, while the throne of her strength is CHRIST: but "in vain⁴ will she strain, if she be not sustained."

THIRD POINT.

Consider how important it is to remain united closely to CHRIST, and not to suffer Him to depart, since His Presence is so full of blessing, yea, so necessary. Reflect on the Appearances in which thou hast meditated on Him since His Resurrection, and thou wilt find in them as many powerful motives for constraining Him to abide with thee unto the end of thy life. "By these frequent Appearances in His Humanity," says the venerable Bede, "the LORD

¹ Is. xl. 31.² 1 Cor. xiii. 7.³ Dilige, et fac quod vis.⁴ John xvi. 23.⁵ Omnia possibilia sunt innitenti super eum.—(S. Bern. in *Floribus*, c. 8.)³ Nihil omnipotentiam Dei reddit clariorem, quam quod omnipotentes facit eos qui in se sperant.—(*Ibid.*)⁴ Frustra nititur, si non innititur.

would teach us that He is every where present in His Divinity to the desires of the good. He appeared at the sepulchre to those who mourned⁵. He will be present with us also, if we are healthfully saddened by the thought of His absence."

He will be always with thee:

If thou dost weep for His absence, like the blessed Magdalene.

If thou dost efface thy sins by the tears of true penitence, like St. Peter.

If thou dost charitably impart to thy neighbours the light and the knowledge that God gives thee, like the devout women of Galilee, who related to the Apostles what they had learned of the Resurrection of their Master.

If thou dost practise charity towards the poor, and dost come to the Holy Communion devoutly and reverently, like the disciples who went to Emmaus.

If thou dost maintain a good understanding with thy brethren, and art living in charity and peace, as the Apostles, who were together when our Lord appeared to them.

If thou dost unite in the public prayers and Divine Services of the Church, not keeping thyself apart, like St. Thomas, who, joining himself to the other Apostles, obtained Grace in their company to see his Risen Lord.

If thou art well employed, and labourest usefully: like the disciples, who, seeking only the Glory of God in their employments, went out fishing with St. Peter.

⁵ Hac frequentia corporalis suae manifestationis ostendere voluit Dominus in omni loco se honorum desiderii divinitus esse praesentem.—(*Beda, Hom. in hæc verba, "Ego Vobiscum."*)

Apparuit ad monumentum lugentibus. Aderit et nobis ejus absentiae recordatione salubriter contristatis.—(*Ibid.*)

If thou lovest CHRIST, and ardently desirest to behold His Glory, like the disciples who beheld Him on the mountain of Galilee.

Lastly; if thou livest in obedience and in the observance of thy rules, and perseverest therein till death, like the Apostles who assembled at Bethany, which signifies "the house of obedience," and there awaited the day of our LORD's Ascension to Heaven, as He had commanded them⁶.

CONCLUSION OF THE GLORIFIED LIFE OF CHRIST
ON EARTH.

The SON of GOD concluded His glorified Life on earth by these words, full of comfort, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We are then assured that He will continue with us, but He is not assured that we shall remain with Him. He is alway with us, but we are not alway with Him. Our inconstancy tempts us away from Him, and then we forget the holy resolutions that we made, to stay by Him and not to forsake Him ever. Yet He still says to us, what was once said to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, "The LORD is with you, while ye be

⁶ "Make good your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place [will dwell with you, Vulg.]"—(*Jer.* vii. 3.)

"Whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak; be not afraid of their faces; for I am with thee."—(*Jer.* i. 7, 8.)

"When thou seest the naked, cover him, and hide not thyself from thine own flesh; and the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward. Then shalt thou cry and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am."—(*Isa.* lviii. 7, 8.)

"Where two or three shall be gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."—(*Matt.* xviii. 20.)

"Live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."—(*2 Cor.* xiii. 11.)

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you."—(*Amos* v. 14.)

with Him ; and if ye seek Him, He will be found of you : but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you ⁷." It is important then to arrest the fickleness of our minds, and so to confirm our constancy in His service and His Love, that nothing shall have power to move it. The inhabitants of Antioch stopped a violent earthquake, which menaced their city with entire destruction in the year 528, by inscribing over the doors of their houses these words, which had been revealed to a holy person, "CHRIST is with us ; stand !" Let us write these words in our hearts, and then, since the SON of GOD promises to be with us always, let it be our only care to continue firmly united to Him and to His service. Let us imitate the prophet Elisha, who, knowing that Elijah would soon be taken from the earth, resolved to follow him every where, and thus obtained a double portion of his spirit. Let us have CHRIST Risen ever before our eyes, and make His Holy Conversation with His Apostles the model of ours.

1. Before His Resurrection He conversed promiscuously with all sorts of persons ; but after He was risen, He conversed only with His chosen friends ; for, says St. Augustine, " After His Resurrection, no wicked man saw CHRIST."

2. Before His Resurrection He was continually with the Apostles, and if He sometimes withdrew to pass the night in prayer, He speedily returned to them ; but after He was risen, He visited them only at intervals ; and His ordinary conversation was with Angels, and with the Saints whom He had released from Hades.

3. Before the Resurrection He accommodated Himself to the weakness of the disciples, and of those

⁷ 2 Chron. xv. 2.

⁸ Post resurrectionem Christum nemo vidit impiorum.—
(*S. Aug. Tract 76 in Joan.*)

with whom He spoke, proportioning His Discourse to the capacity of their minds; but after He was risen, He spoke only of the Kingdom of God; and if His Discourses were fewer, they were far more elevated.

4. Before His Resurrection He used food to sustain Life, but afterwards He had no more need of earthly food; and if He ate with His disciples, it was only to confirm their faith in His Resurrection.

5. Before His Resurrection He appeared always in His own Likeness, but after He was risen, there was a change, so that His disciples failed to recognize Him.

Such, in few words, was His Conduct during His glorified Life on earth; and such must be thine, if thou desirest to attain to perfection.

Thou must avoid evil company; thou must watch unto prayer; thou must speak only of God. Thou must practise abstinence, and manifest such an entire change of manners, as to be enabled to say with St. Paul, "I live; yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me¹." "For² if the same self thou be, holy thou couldest not be." Leave then thyself entirely, to be ever with JESUS. Say to Him in the sincerity of thy heart, "LORD, I would be ever with Thee:" and He on His part will make answer to thee, "Lo, I am with thee alway, even unto the end of the world." I forsake not him that loveth Me. Whosoever serveth Me, "I will be unto him a Wall of Fire round about, and will be the Glory in the midst of Him³." Amen.

¹ Gal. ii. 20.

² Si enim ipse esses, pius profecto non esses.—(*S. Greg. Hom. 31 in Evang.*)

³ Ps. lxxiii. 23.

³ Zech. ii. 5.

